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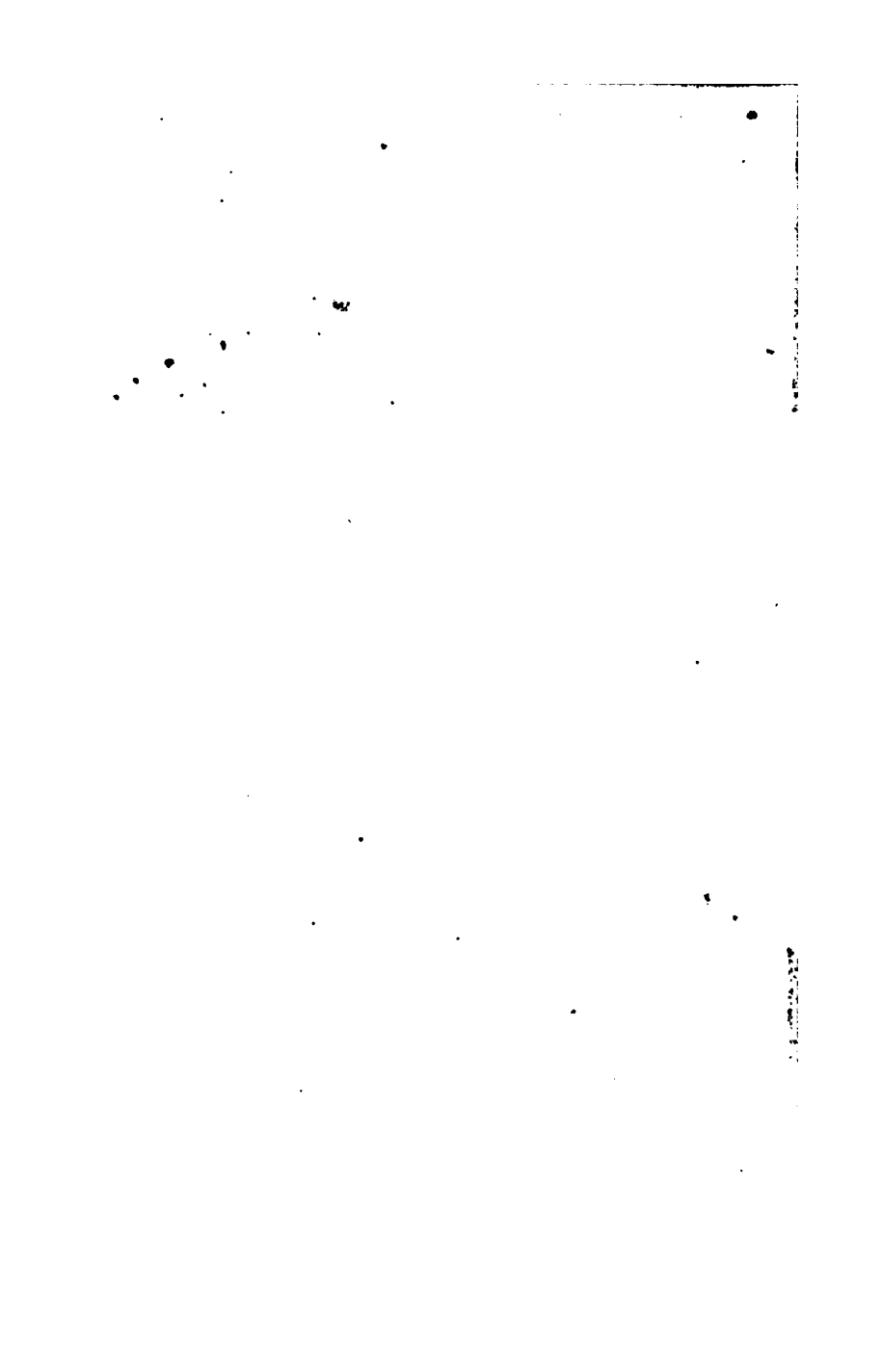
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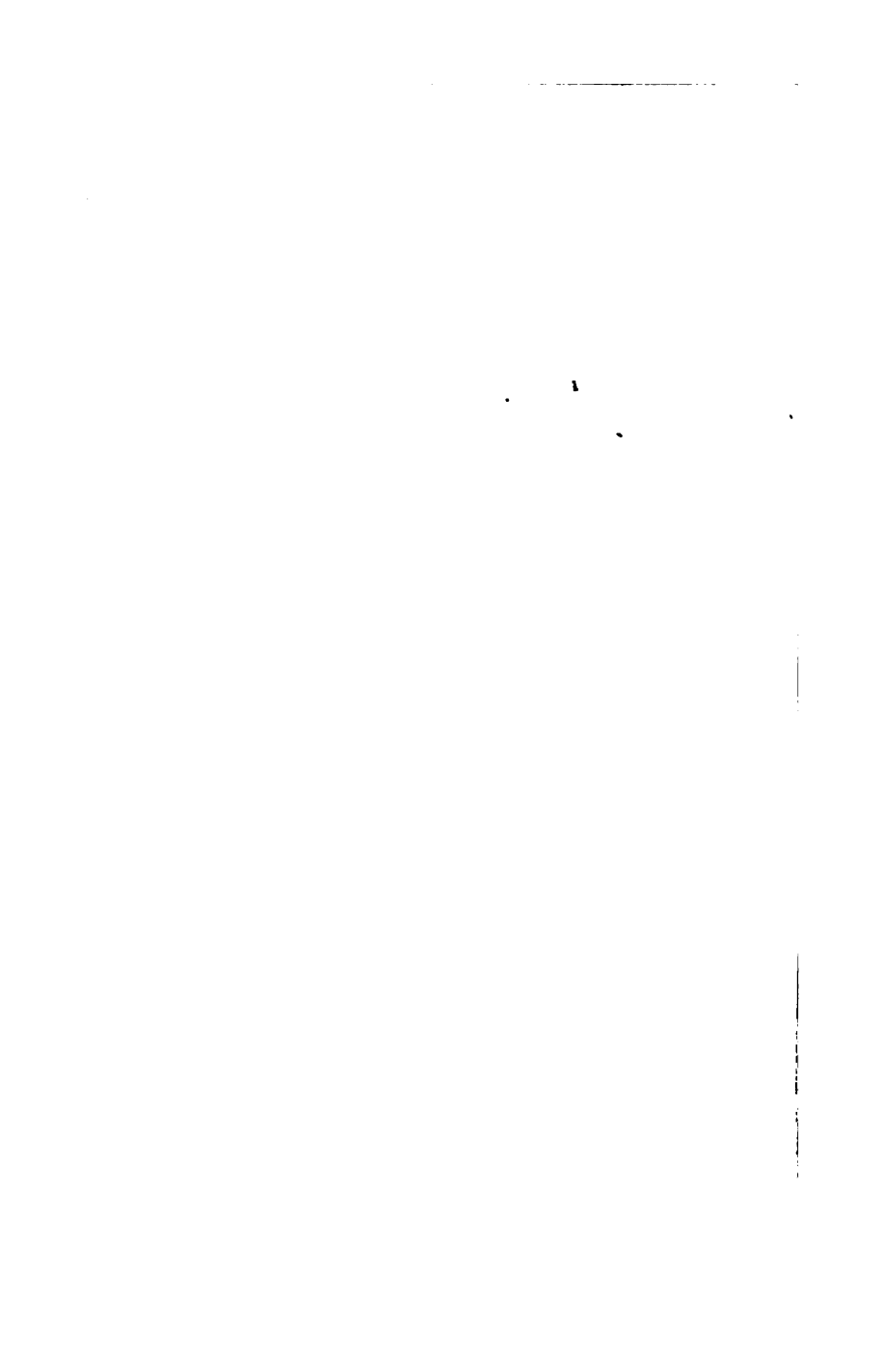












ILLUSTRATIONS

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HUFELAND'S  
ART  
OF  
PROLONGING LIFE.

EDITED BY  
ERASMUS WILSON, F.R.S.



74.

LONDON:  
JOHN CHURCHILL, PRINCES STREET, SOHO.  
MDCCCLIII.

157. c. 134.



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## EDITOR'S PREFACE.

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THE "Art of Prolonging Life," by Christopher William Hufeland, a philosophic physician and professor of medicine in the University of Jena, is a work enjoying a deserved popularity in Germany, where it has gone through several editions. Though translated into English, in 1797, it is but little known in this country, less indeed, as it appeared to the Editor, than its merits deserve; and it is under the hope of being able to fill a vacant niche in popular literature, and restoring to his proper sphere of usefulness an able and accomplished instructor, that the Editor has now undertaken the present edition of his book. In its English costume, and bearing a dedication to George Christopher Lichtenberg, Counsellor of State to his Britannic Majesty, and one of the Professors in the University of Göttingen, the work was published in two octavo volumes, with respectable and roomy type, short lines, shorter pages, and broad margins, an effectual prohibition to its wide diffusion. The translation bears the impress of a master's hand; it is elegant and exact, and in the Editor's judgment is the production of the learned author's own pen. Under this belief, the Editor has selected the translation of 1794, with its pure and classic language, for the present volume, in preference to a new translation from a later German edition.

The Reader will probably be struck, as was the Editor, with the little real progress which has been

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made in the science of living during the more than half a century since the original work was first written; and the feeling of a necessity for bringing the matter up to the present line of march will be dissipated by its perusal. Indeed it 'seemed' to the Editor more fitting as a ground of wholesome reflection, that we should have placed before our eyes the philosophy of half a century back, that we might thereby learn how much still remained to be done, before our knowledge of the subject could be regarded as complete.

With an elegant translation, then, done to his hand, all that remained to the Editor was a labour of taste; to adapt the work to the modes of thinking and feeling of the present day, certain truths, too true to be allowed to stand forth in all their naked proportions, required a veil to be thrown around them; words that betrayed the foreign source of the translation, and bore a meaning different to that which would have been deduced from their construction, required to be exchanged for terms of more obvious nationality; and, in a few instances, certain elaborate disquisitions, bordering on absolute prose, needed to be expunged altogether. The temple of knowledge, at the present day, is called on to put forth all its allurements to invite mankind to enter its portals, while with equal care its harsher features must be thrown into the shade. The art of the arrangement consists in softening the rude by its combination with the refined; in accustoming the senses to the subdued tints before the more sombre shadows are developed. In this, and a few necessary notes, the whole of the Editor's labour is embraced.

HENRIETTA STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE,

*June, 1853.*

THE LIFE OF MAN, PHYSICALLY CONSIDERED, IS A PECULIAR  
CHEMICO-ANIMAL OPERATION; A PHENOMENON EFFECTED BY  
A CONCURRENCE OF THE UNITED POWERS OF NATURE WITH  
MATTER IN A CONTINUAL STATE OF CHANGE. THIS, LIKE EVERY  
OTHER PHYSICAL OPERATION, MUST HAVE ITS DEFINED LAWS,  
BOUNDARIES, AND DURATION, SO FAR AS THEY DEPEND ON THE  
SUM OF THE GIVEN POWERS AND MATTER, THEIR APPLICATION,

## PREFACE.

THE life of man, physically considered, is a peculiar chemico-animal operation; a phenomenon effected by a concurrence of the united powers of Nature with matter in a continual state of change. This, like every other physical operation, must have its defined laws, boundaries, and duration, so far as they depend on the sum of the given powers and matter, their application, and many other external as well as internal circumstances; but, like every other physical operation, it can be promoted or impeded, accelerated or retarded. By laying down just principles respecting its essence and wants, and by attending to observations made from experience, the circumstances under which this process may be hastened and shortened, or retarded and prolonged, can be discovered. Upon this may be founded dietetic rules and a medical mode of treatment for preserving life; and hence arises a particular science, the MACROBIOTIC, or the art of prolonging it, which forms the subject of the present work.

This art, however, must not be confounded with the common art of medicine or medical regimen: its object, means, and boundaries are different. The object of the medical art is health; that of the macrobiotic, long life. The means employed in the medical art are regulated according to the present state of the body and its variations; those of the macrobiotic, by general

principles. In the first it is sufficient if one is able to restore that health which has been lost; but no person thinks of inquiring whether, by the means used for that purpose, life, upon the whole, will be lengthened or shortened; and the latter is often the case in many methods employed in medicine. The medical art must consider every disease as an evil which cannot be too soon expelled; the macrobiotic, on the other hand, shows that many diseases may be the means of prolonging life. The medical art endeavours, by corroborative and other remedies, to elevate mankind to the highest degree of strength and physical perfection; while the macrobiotic proves that here even there is a maximum, and that strengthening, carried too far, may tend to accelerate life, and consequently, to shorten its duration. The practical part of medicine, therefore, in regard to the macrobiotic art, is to be considered only as an auxiliary science which teaches us how to know diseases, the enemies of life, and how to prevent and expel them; but which, however, must itself be subordinate to the higher laws of the latter.

Long life has at all times been the chief wish, the principal object of mankind; but how confused and contradictory are all the plans ever proposed for obtaining it! The stern theologist derides such attempts; and asks, if the period of existence is not determined to every being—and who is able to add a hair-breadth to his stature, or a minute to the duration of his existence? The practical physician exclaims, why do you search for the particular means of prolonging life? Employ my art; take care of your health, guard against diseases, and cure those which have appeared. This is the only way to promote longevity. The adept shows his vital elixir, and boldly asserts that those

who will persevere to take that incorporated spirit of life may hope to become old. The philosopher endeavours to resolve the problem, by teaching men to despise death, and to double life by enjoyment. The innumerable legion of quacks and empirics, on the other hand, who have gained the confidence of the multitude, inspire them with a belief that there are no surer means of becoming old, than to let blood at proper times, and to use cupping, purgatives, &c.

It appeared to me, therefore, useful and necessary to rectify the ideas of the public on a matter of so much importance; and to bring this science back to solid and simple principles, by which it might acquire that connexion and systematic order of which it hath hitherto been destitute.

For eight years this subject has been the favourite employment of my leisure hours; and it will give me great happiness if it be to others only half as serviceable as it has been to me. The present melancholy age, so destructive to mankind, induced me to engage in this undertaking; and the idea of its being useful, while it afforded me the highest consolation, encouraged me to pursue my researches.

My chief aim was to establish the Art of prolonging Life on systematic grounds, and to make known the means for accomplishing that object; but, to convey a proper idea of the whole, it was necessary to comprehend some concomitant circumstances which gradually presented themselves to my notice. This, in the first place, appeared to be the best way of giving a higher interest and more general value to many dietetic rules; because I have always found that much less impression is made when one says, *this or that substance, this or that mode of living, is healthful or unhealthful*, (since



this is relative, and depends on the strength or weakness of the constitution as well as on other points, and has a reference to the immediate consequences, which are often imperceptible, and therefore make those who are not physicians disbelieve the whole,) than when the proposition is thus expressed—*these things, these modes of living, prolong or shorten life*; for this depends less on circumstances, and cannot be judged of from the immediate consequences. And, secondly, this work insensibly became a repository to which I committed many of my favourite ideas; where I indulged in many digressions suited to a citizen of the world, and was happy to have it in my power to connect these ideas by a thread so beautiful and so extensive in joining everything as the thread of life.

According to the point of view under which I necessarily considered my subject, it was natural that I should treat it, not only medically, but also morally; for, how is it possible to write on human life, without taking into consideration its connexion with the moral world, to which it so peculiarly belongs? On the contrary, I have found more than once, in the course of my labour, that the physical man cannot be separated from his higher moral object:—and I may, perhaps, reckon it a small merit in the present performance, that it will not only establish the truth and heighten the value of the moral laws, in the eyes of many, by showing that they are indispensably necessary for the physical support and prolongation of life—but that it demonstrates, that the physical nature of man has been suited to his higher moral destination; that this makes an essential difference between the nature of man and the nature of animals; that without moral cultivation man is in continual contradiction with his own nature;

and that, by culture alone, he becomes even physically perfect. May I be so fortunate, by these means, as to accomplish two objects: not only to render the life of man more healthful and longer; but also, by exciting his exertions for that purpose, to make him better and more virtuous! I can at any rate assert, that man will in vain seek for the one without the other, and that physical and moral health are as nearly related as the body and the soul. They flow from the same sources; become blended together; and when united, the result is, HUMAN NATURE ENNOBLED AND RAISED TO PERFECTION.

I must here observe, that as this work is not designed merely for physicians, but for the public in general, I was obliged in some points to be more diffuse, and in others shorter, than if I had written for the former alone. I had, in particular, a regard to young people; because I am convinced that the grounds of a long or a short life can be most effectually laid at an early period; and that, through unpardonable negligence in the education of youth, information on this subject, so important to their physical happiness, is entirely forgotten. I have, therefore, placed in the clearest light those points most necessary to be known at an early age; and, in general, have treated my subject so that the book may be put into the hands of young persons without any danger:—and it will afford me inexpressible joy if it be not only recommended to them, but employed also in schools, to convey instruction respecting their physical well-being—which must indeed be given in such seminaries, as I unfortunately know, by long experience, that in colleges it will be for the most part too late.

My readers, I hope, will forgive me for not sup-

porting with quotations every instance I have adduced, and every fact related. My motive for omitting them was an apprehension of swelling the work too much, and of rendering it too expensive. I must, however, remark, that the instances given of the age of man are taken chiefly from Bacon's *HISTORIA VITÆ ET MORTIS*.

To conclude, I will readily allow, that many parts of this work might have been written in a better and fuller manner; but I console myself with the agreeable persuasion, which no one can deprive me of, that what I have said may be useful, and that its utility will recommend it, and procure it support.

JENA, *July*, 1796.

# ART OF PROLONGING LIFE.

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## PART THE FIRST.

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### CHAPTER I.

State of this Science among the Egyptians and the Greeks; Gymnastic: Gerocomic; Hermippus. State of it in the middle ages; Theophrastus Paracelsus. Astrological method. Talismans. Thurneiser. Cornaro, and his severe regimen. Method by transfusion. Lord Bacon. St. Germain. Mesmer.

THAT incomprehensible power, that immediate influence of the Deity which we call the vital principle, pervades all nature. We everywhere behold phenomena and effects which evidently announce its presence, though under an infinite variety of modifications and forms; and the existence of life is proclaimed by the whole universe around us. Life is that by which plants vegetate, by which animals feel and are actuated; but in the highest degree of perfection, sensation and form, it appears, in man, the supreme link of the visible creation. If we survey the whole chain of being, we shall nowhere find so complete a combination of almost all the vivifying powers of nature; nowhere so much vital energy, united with so long duration, as here. It needs excite no surprise, therefore, that the most perfect possessor of this benefit should value it so highly; and that the bare idea of living and existing should be attended with so much pleasure. All bodies become the more interesting to us, the more we can ascribe to them a

kind of life and vital sensation. Nothing can engage our attention so much; nothing induce us to make so great sacrifices, and to call forth the most extraordinary display and exertion of our most secret powers, as the desire of preserving life, and of saving it in the moment of danger. To those, even, who are deprived of its comforts and enjoyments; to those who suffer under the pain of incurable disease, or who bewail the loss of freedom in the gloom of a dungeon, the idea of living and existing presents some charms; and it certainly requires a derangement of the finest organs of sensation, a circumstance possible only in man; a total darkening and deadening of the mental faculties, to render life to us either disgusting or indifferent. In so wise and intimate a manner is the love of life, that desire so worthy of a thinking being, that grand pillar of individual and public felicity interwoven with our frame. It was very natural for men, therefore, to conceive the idea whether it might not be possible to prolong our existence, and to give more extent to the too fleeting enjoyment of so valuable a blessing. This question, indeed, has, at all times, engaged the attention of mankind, and in different ways. It has been a favourite object of the deepest thinking minds; it has afforded a fine field for visionaries; and has been the principal allurements employed by quacks and impostors: for we shall find that intercourse with spirits, the secret of making gold, or the art of prolonging life, were the pretences by which they deluded the multitude, and imposed on the credulity of the public. It is interesting, and may contribute something towards the history of the human mind, to see by what various, and often contrary, means people hoped to obtain that benefit; and, as in latter times, a Cagliostro and a Mesmer have supplied considerable materials for this subject, I hope I shall be forgiven if I here take a short view, before I proceed to my main purpose, of the principal methods that have been employed to lengthen the duration of life.

An idea of this kind prevailed, even in the earliest ages, among the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans. In Egypt, a country which gave birth to so many romantic notions, means were devised for the attainment of this object; and it is not improbable that such researches may have been occasioned by the unhealthfulness of the climate, owing to its great heat, and the inundations of the Nile. It was believed there, that life could be prolonged by the continued use of emetics and sudorifics. It was, therefore, a general custom to take, at least, two emetics every month; and instead of saying, How do you find yourself? one asked another, How do you perspire? This passion among the Greeks, under the influence of a pure and serene atmosphere, assumed a different direction. These people were persuaded that a rational enjoyment of nature, and the continual exercise of their powers, were the surest means of strengthening the vital principle, and of prolonging life. Hippocrates, and all the physicians and philosophers of that period, knew no other method of accomplishing this end than by moderation; the use of free and pure air; bathing; and, above all, by daily friction of the body and exercise. Particular directions and rules were laid down for giving violent and gentle motion to the body in a variety of ways: a particular art, called the *Gymnastic*, hence arose; and the greatest philosophers and men of learning never forgot that the body and the soul ought to be exercised in the same proportion. This art, to us almost unknown, of suiting exercise to the different constitutions, situations and wants of man; of employing it, above all, as the means of keeping his internal nature in proper activity, and thereby not only rendering the causes of disease ineffectual, but also curing diseases which have already appeared, they, indeed, brought to an extraordinary degree of perfection. One Herodicus, we are told, carried these ideas so far that he compelled his patients to walk; to suffer their bodies to be rubbed; and, the more the disease weakened them, to

endeavour to overcome that weakness by strengthening the muscular powers: and he had the good fortune to lengthen several years, by this method, the lives of so many enfeebled patients, that Plato reproached him with having acted very unjustly towards these unfortunate people, in prolonging, by artificial means, that existence of which they would always have less and less enjoyment. The clearest ideas and most agreeable to nature on preserving and lengthening life may be found in Plutarch, who, by the happiest old age, confirmed the truth of his prescriptions. His information on this subject, he concludes with the following rules, which may suit also the present age: "Keep your head cool, and your feet warm; instead of employing medicine for every indisposition, rather fast a day; and while you attend to the body, never neglect the mind."

A singular method of prolonging life, ascribed also to the earliest ages, was the *Gerocomic*; or the custom of inspiring new strength and vigour into a body enfeebled under a load of years, by exposing it to the effluvia of fresh and blooming youth. A well-known instance of this practice may be found in the history of King David; and we learn from several passages in the writings of the ancient physicians, that it was formerly much used, and considered as of great efficacy in relieving the infirmities of age. Even in modern times this prescription has been followed with advantage. The great Boerhaave caused an old burgomaster of Amsterdam to sleep between two young persons; and he assures us that the old man acquired by these means a visible increase of vigour and activity. When one, indeed, reflects what change may be produced on diseased limbs by the vital evaporation of animals newly killed, and what may be the consequence of applying living animals to parts affected with pain, this method will appear not to be altogether despicable.

It is highly probable that the great value which the Greeks and the Romans set upon inspiring pure sound breath may have been founded on these ideas; and the

following ancient inscription, discovered at Rome in the last century, seems to allude to this subject:—

Æsculapio et Sanitati.  
L. Clodius Hermippus,  
Qui vixit annos cxv. dies v.  
Puellarum anhelitu.  
Quod etiam post mortem ejus  
Non parum mirantur physici,  
Jam posterī, sic vitam ducite.

† To Æsculapius and Health  
Dedicated  
By L. Clodius Hermippus,  
Who lived cxv years v days  
By the breath of young maids.

Whether this inscription be authentic or not, it gave occasion, in the beginning of the present century, to a work in which one Dr. Cohausen endeavours, with much learning, to prove that Hermippus was the master of a training school, or teacher of female children, at Rome, who, by living continually amidst a circle of young maids, had been enabled to prolong his life to so great an age. He advises people, therefore, with much benevolence, to expose themselves, every evening and morning, to the breath of young innocent maidens; and asserts, that they will thereby contribute, in an incredible degree, to the strengthening and preserving the vital power; as, according to the saying of the adepts, the *first matter* is contained purest in the breath of innocence.

But that long period of darkness during the middle ages, when all clear and natural conceptions were banished by fanaticism and superstition; when the speculative indolence of the cloister gave rise to some chemical and physical discoveries, which served rather to bewilder than enlighten the understanding, and tended more to promote credulity than enlarge knowledge, was the most fertile in romantic notions on this subject. It was during this night of ignorance that the most monstrous chimeras of the human mind were produced; and that those absurd



ideas of witchcraft, sympathy, the philosopher's stone, occult qualities, chiromancy, cabala, universal remedies, were established, or at least propagated in the world; and which unfortunately yet prevail, and, though in a changed and modernised form, are still employed to mislead mankind. Amidst that mental darkness an opinion arose, that the preservation and prolongation of life, which, as the gift of nature, had been hitherto sought for by the most natural means, could be obtained by chemical transmutations, by the help of the *first matter* which men thought they had caught in retorts, by guarding against the influence of malignant constellations, and by other ridiculous conceits of the like kind. I hope I shall, therefore, be here permitted to mention a few of the plans then proposed to mankind, which, notwithstanding their absurdity, were nevertheless credited.

One of the most impudent quacks and greatest boasters among the prolongers of life was Theophrastus Paracelsus, or, as he is better characterized by his whole name, Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Paracelsus Bombastus ab Hohenheim. He had travelled over half the world; had collected receipts and wonder-working medicines from all quarters and corners; and, in particular, which was very uncommon, had studied in mines the nature and management of metals. He began his career by depreciating everything before taught; by treating all the great public seminaries with the utmost contempt; by giving himself out as the first physician and philosopher in the world; and by solemnly asserting that there was no disease which he could not cure, no life which he could not prolong. As a proof of his insolence, and of the high tone in which the quacks of the fifteenth century addressed the public, I shall here quote the beginning of his principal work:—"Ye must give way to me, and not I to you; ye must give way to me, Avicenna, Rhases, Galen, Mesue; ye must give way to me, ye of Paris, ye of Montpellier, ye of Swabia, ye of Misnia, ye of Cologne, ye of Vienna, and whatever places lie on the Danube and

the Rhine: ye islands in the sea; thou Italian, thou Dalmatian, thou Athenian, thou Greek, thou Arabian, thou Israelite; you must give way to me, and not I to you. The monarchy is mine!" One may readily perceive that this author was not in the wrong when he said, "I am not fine-spun by nature;" but he had the art of clothing his absurdities in so dark and mysterious language, that people imagined they contained the deepest secrets which they here and there sought to discover; and that, at any rate, it was impossible to contradict him. By these means, and by the new and accidental effects of some chemical preparations which he first introduced into medicine, he attracted great notice; and his fame was so far extended, that pupils and patients flocked to him from every part of Europe; and that even an Erasmus did not disdain to consult him. He died, however, in the fiftieth year of his age, though he possessed the stone of immortality; and when this vegetable sulphur is closely examined, it is found to be nothing else than a hot substance much like the liquor of Hoffmann.

But it was not enough that recourse should be had to chemistry and the world of spirits in order to prolong our days; the stars also must be employed for that purpose. It was at the above period commonly believed, that the influence of the stars, which people could not allow themselves to suppose idle, ruled over the lives and fortunes of men; that every planet or constellation could give to the whole frame of the being born under it, a certain disposition to good or evil; and that, consequently, it was necessary only for an astrologer to know the hour and minute of a person's birth to discover his temperament, capacity, and fate; to foretel the diseases to which he would be subject, the death he would die, and even the last day of his existence. This opinion prevailed not only among the ignorant multitude, but among the greatest, the wisest, and the most judicious people of the age; and it is astonishing how long and how firmly they relied on these ideas, though instances could not be wanting of

such predictions proving altogether false. Bishops, dignified clergymen, celebrated philosophers and physicians, gave themselves up to the casting of nativities; and lectures were read in colleges on that subject, as well as upon cabala and the art of divination by punctures and circles. As a proof of what I have advanced, let me here be permitted to say a few words respecting the celebrated Thurneiser, the most brilliant phenomenon of this kind; a man truly singular. He resided in the last century at the electoral court of Berlin, and was physician in ordinary, chemist, nativity-caster, almanack-maker, printer, and bookseller, all in one person. His reputation in astrology was so great, that scarcely was there a child born in any respectable family in Germany, Poland, Hungary, Denmark, and even England, whose parents did not immediately despatch a messenger to him with an exact account of the moment of its birth. Eight, ten, and twelve such nativities came to him often at one time; and he was at last so oppressed with them, that he was obliged to engage an assistant in his business. Several volumes of such questions are still preserved in the library at Berlin, among which there appear some letters from Queen Elizabeth. Besides, he composed annually an astrological calendar, in which was described not only the nature of the year in general, but also the principal events of it; and the days on which they would take place were distinguished by abbreviations or signs. He, indeed, for the most part, did not give the explanation of them till the year following; but we find instances of his having been prevailed upon by money and fair words to explain them before. It is astonishing what the art of indefinite prophetic diction and the favour of accident can effect. This calendar supported itself above twenty years; had a rapid and extensive sale; and, with other quackeries, procured to the author an estate of 100,000 florins.

But in an art which prescribed such certain and unpassable boundaries to the life of man, how was it possible to find the means of prolonging it? This was done

in the following simple manner: it was supposed that, as every man lay under the influence of a certain star, every other body, plants, animals, and even whole districts and single houses had each its own star by which it was ruled; and that, besides, there was an intimate connexion and sympathy between the planets and the metals. As soon as it was known from what constellation or planet a man's misfortune or sickness proceeded, nothing more was necessary than that he should use such food, drink, and place of residence, as were under the government of an opposite planet. This produced a new regimen, but totally different from that of the Greeks already mentioned. If a day occurred which, on account of its unfavourable constellation, gave reason to apprehend severe sickness or other evils, people retired to a spot which lay under the disposition of a friendly star, or they took such nourishment and medicine as under the protection of a beneficent star would annihilate the influence of the malignant one.\* On the same grounds people hoped for a prolongation of life by talismans and amulets. Because the metals were in intimate connexion with the planets, to wear a talisman of the proper metal, which had been melted, cast, and stamped, under certain constellations, was sufficient to appropriate to oneself the whole power and protection of the planets with which it was connected. People had not only talismans which averted the diseases of one planet, but talismans for all astral diseases; and some even which, by a particular mixture of different metals, and the pecu-

\* About that period, Marsilius Ficinus, in his Treatise on the Prolongation of Life, advised all prudent people to consult an astrologer every seven years, in order that they should be apprized of the dangers which might threaten them during the following seven; and in particular to respect and to use properly the means of the three holy kings—Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh. M. Pansa, in the year 1470, dedicated to the council at Leipsic, a book *De propayandâ vitâ; Aureus libellus*: in which he strongly advised these gentlemen, above all things, to make known their favourable and unfavourable aspects, and to be on their guard every seven years, because Saturn, a hostile, malignant planet, ruled at those periods.

liar art employed in melting them, acquired the wonderful power of destroying the whole influence of an unlucky nativity; of advancing to offices of dignity, and of rendering the most essential service in regard to commerce or marriage. Was Mars imprinted on a talisman in the sign Scorpio, and had it been cast under that constellation, it rendered the person who wore it invincible and invulnerable; and the German soldiers were so prepossessed with this idea, that, as a French writer informs us, after a defeat which they sustained in France, amulets were found hanging from the necks of all the killed and prisoners. The image of the planet-deity must not, however, for the above purpose, have an antique but a mystic and romantic figure and dress. For jovial diseases one had a talisman with the figure of Jupiter, which bore a perfect resemblance to an old professor of Wittenberg or Basle. He was represented like a man with a beard, in a wide gown lined with fur, holding in the one hand an open book, and demonstrating with the right. I should not have dwelt so long on the present subject, had not this conceit of the last century been again revived a few years ago by Cagliostro, and found partisans here and there towards the end of the eighteenth.

The more ridiculous and abstruse these conceptions were, the more respectable must be the memory of a man who could fortunately rise superior to them, and discover the art of prolonging life by pursuing the path of temperance and of nature. Cornaro, who, by the simplest and strictest regimen, and an unexampled perseverance in his plan, attained happily to a great age, which rewarded him richly for his self-denial, and gave an instructive lesson to posterity, was an Italian. One cannot read the history of the life and abstinence of this veteran of eighty-three, and hear how he praises that serenity and contentment for which he was indebted to his mode of living, without participating in his happiness and his cheerful sensations. Till the fortieth year of his age he had led a life of dissipation; had been always subject to cholics, pains in his

limbs, and a fever; and was so far reduced by the last, that his physicians assured him he could not live above two months; that all medicine would be useless; and that the only thing which could be recommended for him was a spare diet. Having followed this advice, he found, after some days, that he was much better; and at the end of a few years his health was not only perfectly re-established, but he became sounder than ever he had been before. He resolved, therefore, to restrain himself more and more, and to use nothing except what was absolutely necessary for his subsistence. For sixty whole years he took no more than twelve ounces of food, everything included, and thirteen ounces of drink daily. He avoided also violent heat and cold, as well as passion; and by this uniform regimen he kept not only his body but also his mind in such a state of equality that nothing was able to derange them. When at a great age, he lost an important lawsuit; and though this disappointment hurried two of his brothers to the grave, he remained perfectly sound and resigned. He was once thrown from a carriage and trod under the feet of the horses, so that an arm and one of his feet were dislocated; but he caused them to be reduced, and, without the use of any medicine, was soon restored to his former condition. But what is most worthy of remark, and what proves how dangerous the smallest deviation from long custom may be, is what follows. When he was eighty years of age, his friends prevailed upon him, as his body now required more nourishment, to make a little addition to his food. Though well aware that with the general decay of strength the powers of digestion decrease also, and that in old age one ought rather to lessen than increase the quantity of nourishment, he gave way to their request, and raised his food to fourteen and his drink to sixteen ounces. "Scarcely," says he, "had I continued this mode of living ten days, when I began, instead of being cheerful and lively as before, to become uneasy and dejected, a burden to myself and to others. On the

twelfth day I was seized with a pain in my side, which lasted twenty-four hours; and this was followed by a fever, which continued with so much violence for thirty-five days, that my life was despaired of. But, by the blessing of God, and my former regimen, I recovered; and now, in my eighty-third year, I enjoy a happy state both of body and mind. I can mount my horse without assistance; I climb steep hills; and I have lately written a play abounding in innocent wit and humour. When I return home from a private company, or the senate, I find eleven grandchildren, whose education, amusements, and songs, are the delight of my old age. I often sing myself along with them, for my voice is now clearer and stronger than it ever was in my youth; and I am a stranger to those peevish and morose humours which fall so often to the lot of old age." In this happy disposition he attained to his hundredth year; but his example has never been imitated.\*

There was a period when people in France seemed to be so little acquainted with the value of blood, that Louis XIII., in the last ten months of his life, was bled forty-seven times; and besides, he was made to take two hundred and fifteen purgatives, and to use a glyster two hundred and ten times. Soon after, attempts were made, by a process directly contrary, that of filling the veins with fresh youthful blood, to invigorate and prolong the life of man, and to remove incurable disorders. This method was called *transfusion*: and the operation was performed by opening two veins, and, by means of a small pipe, conveying blood from the artery of another living creature into the one vein, whilst the blood was suffered to flow off through the other. Some successful experiments of this kind had been made in England upon animals; and it is certain that some old, lame beasts, sheep, calves, and horses, by filling their bodies with the blood of a young

\* I would earnestly advise people, before they begin this regimen in the strictest sense, to consult their physician; for abstinence carried so far will not be salutary to every one.

animal, had acquired, at least, after some time, sufficient activity and vigour; nay, attempts were even made to inspire courage into timorous animals by the blood of some wild and ferocious one. Encouraged by these experiments, people did not hesitate to try if they could not restore men by the same means. Dr. Denys and M. Emerez, at Paris, were indeed so fortunate as to cure a young man who laboured under a lethargy which had resisted all the power of medicine, and during which he had been blooded twenty times, by filling his veins with the blood of a lamb; and likewise a lunatic, by exchanging his blood for that of a calf. But as only the most incurable and wretched of mankind were chosen for these experiments, it soon happened that some of them died during the operation; and since that time no one has ventured to try it.\* It has, however, been practised on animals here, at Jena, with great success: and indeed it ought not to be entirely rejected; for, though the strange blood introduced into our bodies must be soon converted into our own, and much, consequently, cannot be hoped from

\* Transfusion has now become a standard and most important operation, and has been the means of saving many lives. It is applied in cases of extreme loss of blood, wherein every other proceeding but that of the restoration of the lost blood must necessarily fail. The first idea of transfusion dates back to the early part of the seventeenth century, and is mentioned, in 1615, by Andreas Libavius, in a work on the Transmutation of Metals. In England, the operation was performed on animals, by Dr. Lower and Mr. Edmund King, in the year 1666, and later in the same year, after the news of Denys's success, on the human subject. Dr. Denys and M. Emerez were the first to apply transfusion to man, and their first success was very wonderful; the results however proved unsatisfactory, and the operation was prohibited by parliament. Dr. Riva met with a like want of success in Italy, and the operation was prohibited by an edict of the Pope. It was reserved for Dr. Blundell to discover the secret of its failure and revive transfusion in this country; he pointed out the impropriety of conveying the blood of animals into the human system, and was the first to employ human blood for the purpose. By paying attention to this rule, and the invention of suitable apparatus, the operation may now be deemed perfectly safe; a result for which we are indebted to Dr. James Blundell, Dr. Charles Waller, and Mr. Doubleday.—EDITOR.



it in regard to renewing and prolonging life, the sudden and unaccustomed impression made by new blood upon the noblest of the vital organs, may still, in certain disorders, particularly of the mind and nervous system, produce a great and salutary revolution.

The great Bacon, whose genius embraced every branch of science, and who first pointed out to the human mind, which had long wandered amidst error, the path to conduct it back to truth, this great man himself thought the question respecting the prolongation of life worthy of his attention and researches. His ideas on this subject are bold and new. He considers life as a flame, which is continually consumed by the surrounding atmosphere. Every body, even the hardest, is by this incessant evaporation decomposed and destroyed. He thence concludes that, by guarding against this consumption, and by renewing our juices from time to time, life may be prolonged. For preventing external consumption, he recommends in particular the cold bath, and after bathing, that friction with oil and ointments which was so much practised by the ancients. To lessen internal consumption, he prescribes tranquillity of mind, cooling food, with the use of opium and opiates,\* by which the too great vivacity of the internal emotions will be moderated, and the wasting connected with them will be retarded. But, to remedy the unavoidable desiccation and corruption of the juices, the attendant of increasing years, he considers the best method to be to undergo every two or three years a renovating process, which consists in first freeing the body from all the old and corrupted juices, by spare diet and cathartics; and then again filling the dry vessels with new

\* I trust that none of the readers of this book will be tempted to make use of opium or opiates, upon this prescription of Bacon. That philosopher must have reasoned upon the theoretical properties of opiates as sedatives; but practical observation proves them to be stimulants, and consequently means which tend to increase "internal consumption" very powerfully. The habitual use of opium and opiates would certainly have the effect of shortening rather than of lengthening life,—EDITOR.

juices, by means of choice refreshing and nourishing food; and thus, in the properest sense, to renew and invigorate one's self periodically. The truth contained in these ideas cannot be denied; and, with some modification, these precepts might at all times be employed.

At present, men have made more progress in the arts that shorten life than in that of prolonging it. Abundance of quacks have appeared, and still appear, who with astralish salts, gold-tinctures, ethereal essences, celestial beds, and the magic of magnetism, promise to arrest the course of nature. It was, however, soon found that the celebrated *tea of long life*, of the Count de St. Germain, was only a very vulgar mixture of sandal-wood, sennaleaves, and fennel; that the *elixir of life*, so much boasted of by Cagliostro, was merely a simple but very hot stomachic; that the wonderful virtue of magnetism depended on the combined effects of imagination, nervous irritation, and sensibility; and that the vaunted ethereal salts and gold tinctures contributed more to benefit their inventor, than to prolong the lives of those who employed them.

The phenomenon of magnetism deserves in a particular manner not to be omitted in this catalogue. Mesmer, an enthusiastic physician, who becoming a bankrupt had fallen into contempt, and who, in all probability, was not so much assisted by invisible powers as encouraged by negligent magistrates, at length conceived the idea of making artificial-magnets, which he sold as a sovereign remedy for many diseases, such as lameness, the gout, toothach, headach, &c. As he found that this plan succeeded, he advanced a step farther, and asserted that he had no more occasion for artificial magnets, but that he himself was the grand magnet which should magnetize the world. His own person, he pretended, was so filled with magnetic virtue, that he could communicate it to another by the touch, by stretching out his finger, and even by a single look. He, indeed, produced instances of people who being touched by him, or even looked at,

declared they had experienced sensations as if they had been struck with a stick, or a piece of iron. This singular virtue he called *animal magnetism*; and he connected with that strange appellation whatever is dearest to man, life, wisdom, and health; which by these means he could dispense and diffuse at his pleasure.

As he was not long permitted to propagate his enthusiasm at Vienna, he removed to Paris; and it was there that he first properly began to exhibit. He had astonishing success; every one wished to be cured by him; and all were desirous of participating in his virtue, and of being able to perform miracles also. He established a secret society, every member of which was obliged to subscribe 100 louis d'ors; and he at length boldly declared that he was the man whom Providence had chosen for the grand business of renovating human nature, so visibly decayed. As a proof of what has been here said, I shall lay before the reader only the following address, which he caused to be made to the public by one of his apostles:—  
“Behold a discovery which will bring invaluable advantages to mankind, and eternal fame to its author! Behold a general revolution! Other men will inhabit the earth; they will be checked in their career of life by no weakness; and will be acquainted with our evils only by tradition! Mothers will suffer less from the dangers of pregnancy and the pains of childbirth; and they will bring forth stronger children, who will possess the activity, energy, and courage of the old world. Animals and plants, alike susceptible of the magnetic virtue, will be free from diseases; flocks will more easily increase; the productions in our gardens will have more vigour; the trees will produce more beautiful fruit; and the human mind, in possession of this agent, will perhaps present to Nature effects still more wonderful. Who can know how far its influence may extend?”

One might imagine that one here read some of those dreams of the middle ages; but all these pompous promises, and the prospects which they gave rise to, instantly

vanished, when a commission, at the head of which was Dr. Franklin, had closely examined the agency of this magnetism. The veil was withdrawn, and nothing has remained of the whole deception except *animal electricity*, and the conviction that it can be put in activity by handling and stroking the body various ways; but it is certain that, without the help of nervous weakness and enthusiasm, it will never produce these wonderful phenomena, and that it is still less able to prolong the life of man.

It almost appears that mankind wish now to abandon these ideas entirely to quacks, especially as the more enlightened part make amends for the failure of this invention, by having found that length of life does not consist in number of days, but in the use and enjoyment of it.

But as it is impossible that the one can make up for the other, and as at present our acquaintance with the nature of organized life, and the laws to which it is subjected, has been enlarged and carried to greater perfection, it is worth while to employ this improved knowledge in examining a matter of so much importance, and to establish the method of prolonging life in such a manner, on the principles of physics and animal economy, that not only a more definite rule of life may be thence deduced, but also that this object in future may be rendered of no use to quacks and impostors, who, as is well known, can carry on their deceptions within the precincts of science only so long as they are not enlightened by the torch of accurate investigation.

## CHAPTER II.

Inquiry into the nature of the vital power and the duration of life in general. Properties and laws of the vital power. Definition of life. Vital consumption inseparable consequence of vital operation. Term of life. Causes of the duration of life. Retardation of vital consumption. Possibility of prolonging life. Intensive and extensive life. Sleep.

THE first thing necessary in regard to the prolongation of life must undoubtedly be a more intimate acquaintance with the nature of life, and in particular with the vital power, the grand cause of all life.

May it not be possible, therefore, to investigate more accurately the internal nature of that sacred flame, and thence to discover by what it can be nourished, and by what it is weakened? I am perfectly sensible of the boldness of this undertaking. I approach the *sanctum sanctorum* of Nature; and we have too many instances of daring adventurers, who, blinded in such attempts, were obliged to turn back with confusion; and Haller himself, her most intimate confidant, was forced to exclaim:

No mortal being, howe'er keen his eye,  
Can into Nature's deepest secrets pry.

This, however, ought not to deter us. Nature is, at all times, a kind mother; she loves and rewards those who seek for her; and though it may not always be possible for us to reach the perhaps too exalted object of our aim, we may, nevertheless, be certain to find, by the way, so much new and interesting matter as will amply reward us for attempting to approach nearer to her. Let us only beware of forcing ourselves upon her with too rash and precipitate steps; let our minds be unprejudiced and open

to conviction ; let our progress be cautious ; let us ever be attentive to guard against deception and phantoms of the mind ; and let our path, if not the most convenient, be the certain path of experience and of regular proof ; and let us shun the bolder flights of hypothesis, which, in the end, generally prove to the world that the wings which supported them were cemented with wax. In this path we shall, with the greatest certainty, avoid the fate of those philosophers of whom Bacon says, with much justice, "They are night-owls, who see their visions in darkness, but become blind in the light of experience ; and who perceive least that which is clearest." By this path, and with such a disposition of mind, the friends of Nature, since the time of that great man, have approached nearer to her than any one ever did before ; discoveries have been made respecting her most hidden secrets ; and her most concealed powers have been applied to purposes which astonish the present age, and which will still excite the wonder of posterity. By these means it has been possible, through indefatigable research, even without knowing the internal nature of things, to determine and estimate her powers and properties so accurately that we at least have a practical knowledge of them, and can employ them for the uses of life. The mind of man has thus been able to subdue even unknown agents ; to direct them according to pleasure, and render them of utility. The magnetic and the electric power are agents which both elude our senses, and whose nature will, perhaps, remain eternally unsearchable ; yet we have rendered them so serviceable to us, that by the one we can direct our course through the ocean, and with the other kindle our night-lamp while in bed.

I also, perhaps, shall be able to approach nearer to Nature in the present research ; and I flatter myself that the following method of treating my subject will be the most proper to enable me to attain the object I have in view : first, to define more accurately what is meant by life and the vital power, and also to establish their pro-

perties: next, to consult Nature respecting the duration of life in general, and that of different organized bodies in particular; to collect and compare examples; and, from the circumstances and situations in which the life of a created being has a longer or shorter duration, to draw a general conclusion in regard to the most probable causes of the shortness or long duration of existence. After these premises, a more rational and satisfactory answer may be given to the question, Whether and in what manner the life of man can be prolonged?

What is life? and what is the vital power? These questions may be classed among many of the like kind which occur to us during our researches into Nature. They appear simple; relate to the most common phenomena; and are, however, difficult to be answered. Wherever the philosopher uses the word Power, one may always be assured that he labours under a difficulty, since he explains a thing by a word which is itself a problem; for, who has ever yet combined a clear idea with the word Power? In this manner has been introduced into physics an infinite variety of powers: the power of gravity, the power of attraction, the electric power, the magnetic power, which, at bottom, signify nothing more than the letter that expresses the unknown quantity in algebra. We must, however, have expressions for things whose existence is undeniable, though their agency be incomprehensible; and I hope I shall be here permitted to use them, though it is not yet determined whether what I treat of be really matter, or only a property of it.

The vital power is, without dispute, one of the most general, the most incomprehensible, and the most powerful of all the powers of Nature. It fills and gives motion to everything; and, in all probability, is the grand source from which all the other powers of the physical, or at least the organized world proceed. It is that which produces, supports, and renews everything; by it the creation, after so many thousands of years, revives

every spring with the same freshness and beauty as when it first came from the hand of its Maker. It is inexhaustible and infinite, a real eternal emanation of the Deity. In short, it is this which, purified and exalted by a more perfect organization, kindles up the powers of thought and of the soul; and which gives to rational beings, together with life, the sensation and enjoyment of it. For I have remarked, that the sensation of the value and felicity of life is always very nearly proportioned to the greater or less abundance of the vital power; and that, as a certain overflow of it makes one more capable of action and exertion, and of relishing life, nothing is so capable as a want of it to produce that misery and dejection which unfortunately distinguish the present age so much.

By accurate observation of its phenomena in the organized world, the following properties and laws of it may be established :—

1st. The vital power is the most subtle, the most penetrating, and the most invisible agent of Nature, with which we are as yet acquainted. In these respects it exceeds light, electricity, and magnetism, to which, however, it seems to have the closest affinity.

2nd. Though it pervades everything, there are certain modifications of matter to which it appears to have greater relationship than to others. It unites, therefore, with these in greater abundance, as well as in a more intimate manner, and becomes, as it were, peculiar to them. This modification of matter we call organic combination, and structure of component parts; and the bodies which possess them we call organized bodies,—plants and animals. This organic structure seems to consist in a certain disposition of the finest particles, and we here find a remarkable similarity of the vital power to that of magnetism; as the latter, by a stroke given to a piece of iron, in a certain direction, and which alters the internal disposition of the finest component parts, is immediately excited, and may be again destroyed by a contrary derange-



ment. That, at any rate, the organic structure does not lie in the visible tissue or web, may be seen in an egg, in which no traces of organized life can be found, though it is certain that it there exists.

3rd. It can exist both in a free and a fixed state; and in this it has a great resemblance to fire and electricity. As these may reside in a body without manifesting themselves externally until they are called forth by a suitable stimulus, the vital power, in like manner, may long reside in a fixed state, in an organized body, without indicating itself in any other way than by supporting and preserving itself from dissolution. Of this we have some astonishing instances. A grain of corn can retain life in a fixed state for years, and an egg several months: it neither evaporates nor corrupts; and the stimulus of heat alone can disengage the confined power, and call forth the expansive principle of life. Nay, the already expanding organic life can in this manner be again checked and confined, yet exist some time in that state, and preserve the organization intrusted to it, of which the polypes and animal plants in particular afford us the most remarkable instances.

4th. As it seems to have a different affinity to different organized bodies, and abound more in some and less in others, its union with some is likewise stronger, and with others weaker. And it is worthy of remark, that, where it abounds in the greatest quantity and perfection, it seems there to be more loosely combined. To the imperfect, weak-lived polype, for example, it adheres with more force than to a more perfect animal in a higher degree of existence. For the present inquiry this observation is of the utmost importance.

5th. It gives to everybody which it pervades an entirely new character, a specific superiority to other parts of the corporeal world. In the first place, it renders them susceptible of impressions as a stimulus, and makes them capable of reaction; and, secondly, it frees them from the general physical and chemical laws of inanimate nature:

so that one may with propriety say, by the assistance of the vital power a body is transferred from the mechanical and chemical world to a new one, the organic or living world. Here the general physical laws of Nature have place only in part, and with certain limitations. All impressions in a living body are modified and counteracted in a manner different from what they are in an inanimate body. In a living body, therefore, no process merely mechanical or chemical is possible; and everything assumes the character of life. A blow, or any stimulus, cold and heat, act in a living body according to laws altogether peculiar; and in every effect thence produced must be considered as compounded of the external impression and the reaction of the vital power.

In this lie the grounds of the peculiarity of different species, and even of different individuals. We observe daily that plants which grow near each other in the same soil, and which receive the very same nourishment, are widely different in their form, sap, and properties. This is the case also in the animal kingdom; and hence the common expression, "every one has his own peculiar nature."

6th. The vital power is the principal support of the body in which it resides. It not only binds and keeps together the whole organization, but it counteracts also, very strongly, the destructive influence of the other powers of Nature, so far as they depend on chemical laws, which it is able to annihilate, or at least to modify. Among these I reckon, in particular, the effects of *putrefaction*, of the *atmosphere*, and of *frost*. No living being putrefies; a previous weakening or annihilation of the vital power is always necessary in order to render corruption possible. Even in a fixed and inactive state, it is able to keep off corruption. No egg, so long as it contains the vital power; no grain of corn, no silkworm enclosed in its cocoon, no insect apparently dead, corrupts; and it is truly astonishing how it can preserve bodies which have such a strong tendency to putrefaction as that of man has, for sixty,

eighty, or a hundred years. By its binding property it withstands the power of the atmosphere, the second cause of destruction, which, in the end, dissolves the hardest bodies, and makes them fall to pieces. In like manner, the dangerous excitation of the particles of fire keeps off frost. No living body freezes; that is to say, so long as its vital power is in activity, frost cannot destroy it. Amidst the ice mountains of the South and North pole, where all Nature appears to be in a state of torpor, one sees living creatures, and even men, who are not affected by the general congelation.\* This property of the vital power seems not confined merely to its active, but to belong also to its fixed state. An egg, or a grain of corn, possessed of life, freezes much later than one that is dead. The bear passes the whole winter, half torpid, among the snow; the apparently dead swallow and the pupæ of insects continue under the ice without being frozen. When the frost increases so much as to weaken or oppress the vital power, it can then, only, overcome it, and penetrate a living body. This phenomenon depends in particular on that property which the vital power possesses, of exciting warmth; as we shall see hereafter.

7th. A total loss of the vital power is attended with a dissolution of the organized structure of the body which it before filled. The matter of the body obeys the laws and affinities of inanimate chemical nature, to which it now belongs; its first principles are divided and separated; and corruption, under the usual circumstances, follows; which can alone convince us that a body has been totally deprived of the vital power. But it is a great and striking observation, that corruption itself, which seems to annihilate all life, must be the means of calling forth new life

\* The *galanthus nivalis*, snowdrop, pushes itself from the frozen earth through the snow, and its flower remains unhurt, notwithstanding the severe night frosts. Mr. Hunter caused fish to be frozen into water. As long as they lived, the water, though congealed everywhere else, remained around them fluid, and formed a real hole; but as soon as they died, that part froze up also.

again; and that it is properly nothing else than a highly important process to disengage in the speediest manner the component parts, no longer susceptible of life under that form, and to make them fit for new organic combination and life. No sooner is a body thus decomposed than its fine particles begin to be again animated in a thousand small worms, or to display their revival under the figure of beautiful grass: the most vivid flowers recommence, in this manner, the great circle of organic life; and, by a few changes, become a year after component parts perhaps of as perfect a human being as that with which they appeared to corrupt. Their apparent death was only a transition to a new life; and the vital power leaves a body only that it may unite itself again with it in a more perfect manner.

8th. The vital power may be weakened, and even totally destroyed, by certain causes; and by others can be excited, strengthened, and nourished. Among those which destroy it may be reckoned in particular cold, the great enemy of all life. A moderate degree of cold, however, can be so far strengthening, as it concentrates the vital power and prevents its consumption: but this strengthening is negative, not positive; and a higher degree of cold banishes it entirely. In cold, no vital expansion can take place; no egg can be hatched; no grain of corn shoot forth.

To these also belong certain derangements, which seem to have effect partly by annihilating the vital power, and partly by a destructive alteration of the internal organized disposition of the particles. Thus a violent electric shock, or lightning, deprives plants and animals of life, instantaneously, without leaving the least trace of their having injured the organs; and thus among more perfect beings, in particular, may the vital power be destroyed, in a moment, by violent agitations of the mind, such as sudden fear or joy.

Lastly, there are certain physical powers which are highly capable of weakening and even of annihilating it;

and these, therefore, we commonly call poisons: as, for example, the smallpox infection, laurel water, the essential oil of bitter almonds, &c.

But there are agents also of a contrary kind, which have a friendship for, and an affinity to, the vital power; and which are capable of exciting, invigorating, and, in great probability, of affording it a subtle nourishment. These, in particular, are, light, heat, and air, or rather oxygen; three celestial gifts, which, with great propriety, may be called the friends and guardian spirits of life.

LIGHT, the first of these, is, without doubt, the most intimate friend and relation of life; and, in this respect, has certainly a much more essential effect than is commonly believed. The life of every created being is the more perfect the more it enjoys the influence of light. Let a plant or an animal be deprived of light, notwithstanding every nourishment, care, and cultivation, it will first lose its colour, then its strength, and at last entirely decay. Even man, who passes his life in darkness, becomes pale, relaxed, and heavy, and at length loses the whole energy of life; as is proved by the many melancholy instances of persons shut up in gloomy dungeons. Nay, I do not think I say too much when I assert, that organized life is possible only under the influence of light, and in all probability through it; for in the bowels of the earth, in the deepest caverns, where eternal night prevails, nothing is seen but what we call unorganized life. There nothing breathes, there nothing feels; and the only productions which one finds are a few kinds of mould and stone moss, the first most imperfect degree of vegetation. For that reason this vegetation, for the most part, shows itself only on old or rotten wood. The expansion of organized life must, therefore, be here excited by wood and water, or by that putrefaction which generates life, and which in those abysses does not exist.

The second, no less beneficent friend of the vital power, is HEAT, which is alone able to call forth the first movements of life. When winter has reduced all nature to a

deathlike condition, let the genial warmth of the spring atmosphere only breathe upon it, and all its dormant powers are awakened to activity. The nearer we approach the poles everything becomes deader, and we at length find districts where absolutely no plant, insect, or small animal can exist, and where only large masses of being, such as whales, bears, and the like, can retain that warmth necessary for life. In a word, where there is life there is heat, in a greater or less degree; and between both there is a very important and inseparable connexion. Warmth gives life, and life again excites warmth; and it seems difficult to determine which is the cause, and which the effect.

Of the extraordinary power which heat has to nourish and awaken life, the following entirely new and decisive instance deserves to be mentioned. On the 2nd of August, 1790, a carabinier, named Petit, threw himself, entirely naked, into the Rhine, from a window of the military hospital at Strasburg. This circumstance was observed about three o'clock in the afternoon; and the body remained above half an hour in the water before it was drawn out, to all appearance perfectly dead. It was placed in a bed thoroughly warmed, with the head raised up, the arms stretched out close to it on each side, and the legs laid together. No other process was employed than the application of warm cloths to the stomach and legs. Warm stones, also, wrapped up in cloth, were placed in different parts of the bed. In the course of seven or eight minutes a small motion was observed in the eyelids. A little while after, the under jaw, which had been fast locked to the upper one, became loose; the patient foamed at the mouth, and he was able to swallow a few spoonfuls of wine. His pulse now returned, and at the end of an hour he was able to speak. Warmth, in cases of apparent death, acts evidently with as much power as on the first expansion of life: it nourishes the smallest sparks of the vital principle still remaining; fans them, and gradually rouses them into a flame.

The third important nourisher of life is AIR. We find no being that can live entirely without air; and sudden, sometimes instantaneous, death is to most of them the consequence of its being withdrawn. What makes its influence highly visible is, that those animals which breathe are more abundant in the vital power, and possess it in greater perfection, than those which do not breathe. De-phlogisticated or empyreal air appears, principally, to be that component part of our atmosphere which affords the strongest and best nourishment to the vital power; and in the present age, since the wonder-working art of chemistry has taught us to produce it pure, people, on inspiring it, have experienced a general sensation of strengthening and invigoration. The grand principle of this empyreal or vital air is by chemists called *oxygen*; and this component part is that properly which in the air which contains life, and passes into the blood by breathing. Water, also, belongs to the agents friendly to life, so far as it contains oxygen; and it certainly promotes life, for without fluidity no expansion of life is possible.

I think I may with justice, therefore, assert, that light, heat, and oxygen are the real proper nourishment and sustenance of the vital power. Grosser kinds of nourishment, setting aside the quantity of oxygen and empyreal matter which they contain, seem to serve rather for supporting the organs and repairing the consumption. Were not this the case, one could not explain how created beings can maintain life so long without nourishment. Let us only consider the chicken in an egg. It lives without the smallest external support; expands itself, and becomes a perfect animal. A hyacinth, or any other bulbous plant, can, without the least nourishment—except the evaporation of water—expand and shoot forth a stem crowned with beautiful leaves and flowers. Even among more perfect animals we observe phenomena which would otherwise be inexplicable. Dr. George Fordyce, for example, enclosed gold fish in vessels filled with well-water; gave them at first fresh water every twenty-four

hours, but afterwards only every three days; and yet they lived fifteen months without any nourishment, and, what is more wonderful, became twice as big. But, as it might have been believed that the water contained a multitude of invisible nutritive particles, he distilled it; added air to it again; and, to prevent the introduction of insects, closed up the vessels with great care. Notwithstanding all this, the fish lived a long time, increased in size, and had excretions. How is it possible that man himself could endure hunger so long and yet retain life, if the nutriment of the vital power were necessarily derived from the substances by which he is nourished? A French officer, after a tedious and severe illness, was seized with a mental disorder, during which he resolved to starve himself to death; and he continued so firm to his purpose that, for the space of forty-six days he did not take the smallest grain of food. On the fifth day he asked only for some distilled water; and as half a pint of anise-seed water was given to him, he used the whole of it in three days. His friends, however, having represented to him that this quantity was too much, he put into each glass of water that he drank no more than three drops; and in this manner his half-pint lasted till the thirty-ninth day. He then gave over drinking, and for the last eight days took nothing at all. After the thirty-sixth day he was obliged to lie in bed; and it is remarkable that this man, extremely clean in other respects, exhaled during the whole time of his fasting, a very offensive smell, in consequence of the interrupted renovation of his juices, and the corruption attending it; and that his eyes became weak. All advice proved ineffectual, and his friends gave him up as lost, when the voice of Nature was suddenly awakened within him by an accident. He saw a child with a piece of bread-and-butter enter the apartment where he was. This sight excited his appetite so much at once that he begged for some soup. A few spoonfuls of rice broth were now given him every two hours; some stronger food was gradually added; and his health, though slowly, was



in this manner again wholly restored. But it is very singular that while he fasted and was weak, his phrensy and wild imaginations forsook him, and that he answered when addressed by his usual name; but as soon as he had acquired strength by eating, his whole train of incoherent ideas again returned.\*

9th. There is still a cause which tends to weaken and diminish the vital power, and which lies in itself, viz. the loss it sustains by exerting its strength. By every exertion it loses some of its force; and when these exertions are too violent, or continued without intermission, the consequence is that it may be completely exhausted. This is proved by common experience, as we find that, after great exertion in walking, thinking, &c., we become fatigued. It is shown still more clearly by the experiments of Galvani, in which, after death, a muscle and nerves, still alive, may be irritated by the application of metal. If this irritation be often and strongly repeated, the power will be sooner exhausted; but if slowly, it will be exhausted later: and even when it appears to be totally exhausted, one, by intermitting the irritation for some time, can occasion a new accumulation of it, and produce fresh exertions. Hence arises a new means of strengthening, namely *rest*, or a suspension of exertion, by which indeed the power can be accumulated and increased.

10th. The most immediate functions of the vital power are not only to receive impressions, such as irritation, and to react upon them, but also to change into organized nature the component parts which are added to the body; that is, to unite them according to the laws of organization, and also to give them that structure and form which the end of organization requires.

11th. The vital power pervades all the parts of an organized living body, whether fluids or solids; but it manifests itself in different ways, according to the difference of the organs: in the nerves, by sensibility; in the muscles, by irritability, &c. This it does for some time

\* See Hist. de l'Académie Royale des Sciences. An. 1769.

visibly and without interruption, and is what we name generation or *growth*, until the organized body has attained to its destined degree of perfection. This plastic, creative power, does not, however, cease to act; but what was before growth, becomes now constant *renovation*; and this incessant regeneration is one of the most important means which support the being.

These observations on the nature of this wonderful power are sufficient. It will now be easier for us to speak in a more precise manner on the influence which this power has on life; to explain what life properly is; and to say something decisive concerning its duration.

LIFE, in an organized being, means the free active state of the before-mentioned power, and the activity and efficiency of the organs inseparably connected with it. The vital power, therefore, is only capacity; life itself action. Every life, consequently, is a continued operation of the efficiency of the power and of organic exertion. A continual consumption of the power and of the organs is necessarily the immediate consequence of this process; and, on that account, an incessant renovation of both is requisite in order that life may be supported. The process of life may then be considered as a continued process of consumption; and its essence may be defined an uninterrupted wasting and reparation of ourselves. Life has been already often compared to a flame; and indeed the operation in both is the same. Destructive and creative powers are engaged, with never-ceasing activity, in a continual struggle within us; and every moment of our existence is a singular mixture of annihilation and new creation. As long as the vital power retains its freshness and energy, the living plastic powers will have the superiority, and afford it protection in this contest: the body will also increase and approach nearer to perfection. By little and little they will balance each other, and, the consumption becoming equal to the renovation, the body will at length decrease. At last, the vital power being lessened, and the organs worn out, the consumption

will begin to exceed the renovation; and decay, degradation, and, in the end, a total dissolution will unavoidably follow. This is universally the case. Every created being passes through three periods: that of its growth, that of its being stationary, and that of its decline.

The duration of life, in general, depends on the following points:—

1. On the quantity of the vital power which resides in the being. A greater supply of the vital power will naturally last much longer, and be later consumed, than a smaller. Now we know, from what has been before said, that the vital power has a greater affinity to some bodies, and to others a less; that it abounds much more in some than in others; and that many external causes tend to weaken it, and many to nourish it. This, therefore, gives us the first and most important ground of the difference in the duration of life.

2. But, besides the vital power, the organs also are consumed and wasted by living; and, consequently, a total consumption must take place later in a body the organs of which are strong, than in one of a delicate structure more liable to dissolution. Besides, the operation of life itself requires the continual agency of certain organs, which we therefore call the vital organs. If these be diseased, or unfit for use, life cannot continue. A certain firmness of organization, and a proper condition of the vital organs, form the second ground on which the duration of life depends.

3. The process of consumption may be carried on more slowly, or more rapidly; and, consequently, the duration of it, or what we call life, even when the powers and organs are perfectly alike, will be longer or shorter in proportion to the quickness or slowness of the operation; just as a candle lighted at both ends at the same time burns twice as fast as one lighted in the usual manner, or as a light in oxygen gas is consumed ten times faster than one of the same kind in common air, because by that medium the process of consumption is increased and acce-

lerated in a tenfold proportion. This affords the third ground of difference in the duration of life.

4. As renovation of what is lost and continual regeneration are the principal means of counteracting the consumption, those bodies which internally and externally have the best means of regenerating themselves with most ease, and in the greatest perfection, will naturally be of longer duration than those which are destitute of that advantage.

In short, the duration of life in a being will be proportioned to the *innate quantity of vital power*, the greater or less *firmness of its organs*, the speedier or slower *consumption*, and perfect or imperfect *restoration*. All ideas on the prolongation of life, as well as all the means which have been or may be proposed on that subject, can be brought under these four classes, and be examined upon these principles.

From these, several important deductions may be made, and several obscure questions may be answered, of which I shall only mention a few.

Is the *extent of life* determined or not? This question has oft given rise to disputes in which divines and philosophers have been divided, and which have several times brought the medical art into great difficulties. On the above principles, however, it may be easily resolved. Each race of beings, as well as each individual, has its term of life as certainly fixed as it has its defined size, and its proper quantity of vital power, strength of organs, and means of consumption or regeneration; for the duration of life is a consequence of that consumption, and can continue no longer than power and organs are able to support it. But this consumption may be hastened or retarded: favourable or unfavourable, destructive or beneficial circumstances may have an influence upon it; and it thence follows that, notwithstanding the before-mentioned natural determination, the limits of it may be altered.

A general answer may now be given also to the follow-

ing question : Is it possible to prolong life ? Undoubtedly it is ; but not by magical cures or gold tinctures ; nor can we hope to increase the quantity and efficacy of the vital power which has been dispensed to us, or to alter the whole determination of Nature. Whatever is done must be effected by proper attention to the above four points, on which the duration of life properly depends ; by strengthening the vital power and the organs ; by retarding consumption, and by promoting or facilitating renovation or regeneration. The more food, clothing, manner of living, climate, and even artificial means are favourable to these requisites, the more influence they will have in the prolongation of life ; the more they counteract these, the more will they shorten the duration of existence.

What I call retardation of vital consumption, as being, in my opinion, the most important means of prolonging life, deserves here, in a particular manner, to be considered. If we suppose that each body is possessed of a certain quantity of vital power, and certain organs which make as it were our stock of life, and that life consists in a consumption of them, it must be allowed that this stock may be naturally consumed by a stronger exertion of the organs, and by the speedier wasting which is connected with it. He who in a day consumes twice as much of the vital power as another, will exhaust his stock sooner ; and organs used with double force will in half the time be worn out and become useless. The energy of life, therefore, will be in an inverse ratio with its duration ; or the more intensively a being lives, the more will its life lose in extension. The expression *fast living*, which, as well as the thing itself, is at present so common, is not then altogether improper. One may certainly make the process of vital consumption, whether it consists in labour or enjoyment, more or less rapid, and thus live either fast or slowly. In future I shall distinguish the one by the expression *intensive life*, and the other by that of *extensive life*. This truth is confirmed, not only among men, but also throughout all Nature. The less intensive the life of a being is, the longer

will be its duration. If the intensive life of a plant be increased by heat, manure, and artificial means, it will expand itself to perfection more rapidly, but it will also soon decay. Even a being which naturally possesses an abundant stock of vital power will, when its life is intensively active, be of shorter duration than another less abundant in vital power, but which has by nature a life less intensive. Thus it is certain, for example, that the higher classes of animals have the vital power in far greater quantity and perfection than vegetables; yet a tree lives a hundred times as long as the spirited horse, because the life of the tree is intensively weaker. In this manner, weakening circumstances, when they only lessen the intensive activity of life, may be the means of prolonging it; and, on the other hand, influences which strengthen and excite life, when they increase the internal activity too much, may be prejudicial to its duration. Hence it is evident how very sound health may shorten the duration of life, and a certain kind of weakness be the best means of prolonging it; and that the diet and means used for lengthening life, cannot be altogether those which are commonly called *corroborative*. In this respect, Nature herself gives us the best lesson, as she has connected with the existence of every more perfect being, a certain regulation, which is able to check the stream of its vital consumption, and thereby prevent too rapid wasting. I here allude to sleep, a condition which takes place in every animal of a perfect kind: a disposition of the utmost wisdom, which, in directing and retarding the vital consumption, acts in the same manner as the pendulum of a clock. The time of sleep is nothing else than a suspension of intensive life, or an apparent loss of it; but even in this suspension, this interruption of its activity, lies one of the greatest means of preserving it. A twelve or sixteen hours' uninterrupted continuation of intensive life, causes such an impetuous stream of consumption as produces a more violent pulse, a kind of general fever, the so-called daily evening fever. Sleep then comes to the relief of the body;

reduces it to a more passive condition ; and after a seven or eight hours' pause of this kind, the destructive stream of vital consumption is so much checked ; what has been lost is so fully renewed, that pulsation and all its other movements are again performed slowly and regularly, and everything proceeds with a peaceful course as before.\* Nothing, therefore, is able to waste and destroy us so speedily as long continued want of sleep. Trees even, those Nestors of the vegetable kingdom, without the annual sleep of winter, would not be able to preserve their lives so long.†

\* Old people, therefore, sleep less, because their intensive life, or vital consumption, is weaker, and requires less restoration.

† In many plants we even find something which may with great propriety be compared to the daily sleep of man. Their leaves every evening are contracted, or droop ; their flowers shut themselves up, and their whole external appearance displays a state of rest and repose. Some have ascribed this to the coolness and moisture of the evening ; but the same thing takes place also in the greenhouse. Others have considered it as a consequence of darkness ; but many shut themselves up in summer at six o'clock in the afternoon. Nay the *tragopogon luteum* shuts itself up so early as nine in the morning ; and this plant, therefore, gives us reason to compare it to certain night birds and beasts of the animal world, which are active only during the night, and sleep in the daytime. Every hour of the day even has some plant which then shuts itself up, and on this is founded what is called a *plant-dial*.

## CHAPTER III.

Duration of the life of plants; diversity of it. Annual, biennial, perennial. Experiments respecting circumstances by which this is determined; result of them. Application of the fundamental principles of the duration of life. Great influence of attention and culture on the duration of the life of plants.

IN order to prove and confirm what has been before said, let me now be permitted to take a view of all the classes of the organized world, and endeavour to establish on solid principles what I have asserted. This will give us an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the most important collateral circumstances which have an influence in prolonging or shortening life. How infinitely various is the duration of the different organized beings! Between the mould, which lives only a couple of hours, and the cedar, which can attain to the age of a thousand years, what a difference; how numberless the intermediate degrees; what a variety of life! The grounds, however, of this longer or shorter duration must lie in the structure of each being. This is an important and interesting circumstance, but at the same time of the utmost extent. I must, therefore, content myself with deducing from it the principal data, and exhibiting them in our present point of view.

In this respect, plants, that immense world of creation, that first degree of organized beings which nourish themselves by internal appropriation, form an individual and propagate their race, first present themselves to our view. What infinite variety of shape, organization, size, and duration! According to the latest discoveries and calculations, they amount to forty thousand genera and species at least!



They may all, however, be reduced, according to their duration of life, into three principal classes : annual, or properly only semi-annual, which grow up in spring, and die in autumn ; biennial, which die at the end of the second year ; and, lastly, perennial, the duration of which extends from four to a thousand years.

All plants of a soft watery constitution, and which have fine tender organs, have a short life, and last only one or at most two years : those alone which have stronger organs and tougher juices exist longer ; but wood is absolutely necessary in order to attain to the highest degree of vegetable existence.

Even among those which live only one or two years a remarkable difference may be observed. Those which are of a cold insipid nature, and destitute of smell, live, under like circumstances, not so long as the strong-scented, balsamic plants, which contain more essential oil and spirits. Lettuce, wheat, oats, barley, and all kinds of corn, live no more than a year ; but, on the other hand, thyme, mint, hyssop, balm, wormwood, marjoram, sage, &c., can live two years, and even longer.

Shrubs and small trees can live sixty years, and some even twice that number. The vine attains to sixty or a hundred years, and continues fruitful at the greatest age. This is the case also with rosemary. The acanthus and ivy, however, can exceed the age of a hundred. Among many, such, for example, as the different kinds of *rubus*,\* it is difficult to determine the age, as the branches creep along the ground, and always form new plants, so that it is almost impossible to distinguish the new from the old ; and by these means they make their existence as it were perennial.

Those which attain to the highest age are the greatest, strongest, and hardest trees ; such as the oak, the lime-tree, the beech, the chestnut, the elm, the plane-tree, the cedar, the olive, the palm, the mulberry-tree, and the

\* Common bramble, blackberry, raspberry.

baobab.\* We may with certainty affirm, that some of the cedars of Lebanon, the celebrated chestnut-tree *di centi cavalli* in Sicily, and several of the sacred oaks under which the ancient Germans performed their religious ceremonies, may have attained to the age of a thousand years and more. These are the most venerable, the only now existing testimonies of the ancient world, and inspire us with reverence and awe when the rustling wind plays through their silvery locks, which once served to overshadow the Druids and our wild ancestors clothed in their bearskins.

All trees of a rapid growth, such as the fir, the birch, the horse-chestnut, and the like, yield always less solid and durable wood, and the period of their existence is shorter. The oak, which is the slowest in growing of all, has the hardest wood, and its life is of the longest duration.

Smaller vegetables have, in general, a shorter life than those which are large, tall, and spreading.

Those trees which have the hardest and most durable wood are, however, not always those which live longest. The beech, for example, the cypress, the juniper, the walnut, and the pear-tree, do not live so long as the lime-tree, though its wood be softer.

Those which produce juicy, tender, and delicate fruit, are, in general, shorter-lived than those which are barren, or which bear fruit entirely useless. And among the former, those which bear nuts or acorns become older than those which produce berries and fruit with stones.

Even these short-lived trees, the apple, the pear, the apricot, the peach, the cherry, &c., can, under very favourable circumstances, prolong their life to sixty years; espe-

\* This newly discovered tree (*Adansonia digitata*) seems to be one of those which live to the greatest age. Its trunk acquires the thickness of twenty-five feet in diameter; and Adanson, in the middle of the present century, found trees only six feet in diameter, which had cut on them the names of seafaring people who had visited them in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, yet these incisions had become very little extended.

cially when they are freed from the moss which grows upon them.

We may establish it as a general rule, that those trees which are long in producing leaves and fruit, and which also do not soon lose them, become older than those in which both these changes take place speedily. Those, likewise, which are cultivated, have, in general, a shorter existence than those which grow wild; and those which produce sour, harsh fruit, live longer than those which produce sweet.

It is highly worthy of remark, that when the earth is dug up every year around the roots of a tree, it becomes more vigorous and fruitful; but the duration of its life is shortened. On the other hand, if this be done only every five or ten years, it will live the longer. In the like manner, frequent watering and manuring promotes fruitfulness, but it injures the duration of life.

One, also, by frequently lopping off the branches and buds, may contribute very much to the duration of the life of a shrub; so that small, shortlived plants, such as lavender, hyssop, and the like, if annually pruned, may prolong their life to the age of forty years.

It is also to be remarked, that when one turns up the earth, which has remained long untouched and unchanged, around the roots of old trees, and makes it softer and looser, they will produce fresher and more vigorous leaves, and become, as it were, again young.

When we consider with attention these observations, derived from experience, it is perfectly evident how much they confirm the above established principles of life and vital duration, and that they coincide perfectly with these ideas.

Our first grand principle was: the greater the quantity of vital power, and the solidity of the organs, the longer will be the duration of life; and we now find in Nature that the greatest, the most perfect, and the best-formed productions, in which, also, we must allow the greatest

abundance of the vital power, and those which have the strongest and most durable organs, are precisely those which enjoy the longest life; as, for example, the oak and the cedar.

The bulk of the corporeal mass evidently appears here to contribute to the duration of life, and on the three following grounds:—

I. Bulk shows a greater provision of the vital or plastic power.

II. Bulk gives more vital capacity, more surface, more external access.

III. The greater mass a body has, the more time is required before it can be wasted by its external and internal consumptive and destructive powers.

We, however, find that a plant may have very strong and durable organs, and yet not live so long as one the organs of which are of less solidity. Of this we have an instance in the lime-tree, which lives much longer than the beech or the cypress.

This now leads to a law of the utmost importance for organized life and our future research; which is, that, in the organic world, a certain degree only of solidity promotes the duration of life, and that too high a degree of tenacity shortens it. In general, however, and among unorganized beings, it is undoubtedly certain, that the more solid a body is, the greater will be its duration; but in organized beings, where the duration of existence consists in continual activity of the organs and circulation of the juices, this observation is limited, and too great a degree of solidity in the organs, and toughness in the juices, makes them sooner immovable and unfit for discharging their functions, produces obstructions, and brings on premature old age, and even death.

It is not, however, merely on the quantity of the power and the organs that the vital power depends. We have already seen that a great deal, in particular, depends on

the speedier or slower consumption, and on perfect or more imperfect restoration. Is this, therefore, confirmed in the vegetable kingdom?

It is, in the fullest manner; and we here find this general law: the more intensive life a plant has, the stronger and speedier is its internal consumption, the sooner it decays, and the shorter is its duration: on the other hand, the more capacity a plant has, either internally or externally, to regenerate itself, the longer it will preserve its existence.

I shall now proceed to treat, in the first place, on the law of *consumption*. Plants in general have a very weak intensive life, which consists only in the functions of growth, propagation, and receiving nourishment. They are subject to no arbitrary changing of place, no regular circulation, no muscular or nervous motion. The function of generation is, beyond dispute, the highest degree of their internal consumption, the utmost stretch of their intensive life. But how speedily is it followed by decomposition and annihilation! Nature appears here to make, as it were, the greatest exertion of her plastic power, and to show the *ne plus ultra* of the highest finishing and of bringing to perfection.

What tenderness and delicacy in the structure of the flower; what elegance and splendour of colours astonish us often in the most inconsiderable plant, to which we never could have ascribed such expansion. These are, as it were, the dress of ceremony, with which the plant celebrates its greatest festival, but with which it also often exhausts its whole stock of vital power, either for ever, or at least for a long time.

All plants, without exception, lose, immediately after this catastrophe, the vigour of vegetation; and begin to be stationary, which is the commencement of their dissolution. In all annual plants complete death follows; among the larger plants and trees, a temporal death at least, or a torpor of half a year, until, by the great strength of their

regenerating power, they are again put in a condition to shoot forth new leaves and flowers.

On the same principles it may be explained, how all plants which acquire early the power of generation die also soonest: and it is an invariable law for the duration of life in the vegetable kingdom, that the earlier and speedier a plant comes to flower, the shorter time will its life continue; but the later it flowers, its existence will be of the longer duration. All those which flower immediately, the first year, die also the same year; and those which flower for the first time the second year, die also the second. Those trees only, and woody shrubs, which first begin to generate in the sixth, ninth, or twelfth year, become old; and among these, those genera which arrive latest at the period of propagation become likewise the oldest. A highly important observation, which, in part, fully confirms my ideas of consumption, and gives an instructive hint in regard to our future research.

An answer may now be given to that important question, What influence has *cultivation* on the longer or shorter duration of the life of plants?

Culture and art, upon the whole, shorten life; and it may be admitted as a fundamental principle, that in general all wild plants, left to themselves, live longer than those which are cultivated. Every kind of culture, however, does not shorten life; for, by careful attention, a plant which lives only one or two years in the open air, may be preserved much longer: and this is a very remarkable proof, that, even in the vegetable kingdom, it is possible to prolong life by a certain kind of treatment. But the question now is, In what consists the difference of that culture which prolongs life, and that which shortens it? This may be of importance to us in the following research, and may be referred to our first fundamental principle. The more cultivation strengthens intensive life and internal consumption, and at the same time makes the organization more delicate, the more is it prejudicial to

these plants spring from a mass of earth already organized, they immediately receive juices assimilated and prepared, and can therefore employ them in the production of flowers and fruit, which with sap derived immediately from the earth would be impossible.

Secondly, these delicate plants, which in reality we may consider as so many annuals, die again after the process of fructification is completed, and yet the vegetable itself, or the stem, continues perennial. Nature, therefore, remains here true to her fundamental law, that the function of generation exhausts the vital power of single individuals, and yet the whole is perennial.

In a word, the result of all these observations is, that the great age of a plant depends on the following points :—

- I. It must grow slowly.
- II. It must propagate itself slowly, and late.
- III. It must have a certain degree of solidity and duration in its organs, a sufficiency of wood, and the sap must not be too watery.
- IV. It must be large, and have considerable extension.
- V. It must rise into the atmosphere.

By the contrary of all these the duration of life is shortened.

## CHAPTER IV.

Duration of life in the animal world. Observations on plant-animals.

Worms. Insects. Metamorphosis an important means of prolonging life. Amphibia. Fish. Birds. Animals which suckle. Result. Influence of maturity and growth on the duration of life. Perfection or imperfection of organization. Rapid or slow vital consumption. Restoration.

THE animal kingdom, or second grand class of the more perfect part of the organized world, is immensely rich in being, and in variety and diversity of duration. Between the elephant, which attains to the age of a hundred years, and the ephemeron, that small perishable insect, which exists scarcely a day, and which in the twentieth hour of its life is an experienced veteran among its numerous posterity, there are innumerable intermediate degrees of vital capacity and duration; but amidst this vast abundance I shall content myself with collecting only such data as may serve to illustrate our principal question, On what does the duration of life depend?

To begin with worms, the most imperfect class of all, which approach very near to plants; these, on account of their tender, soft nature, can be injured and destroyed with remarkable ease; but, like plants, they have the best support in their extraordinary power of reproduction, by which they can renew whole parts. Nay, when divided into two or three pieces they can still live, and it is consequently difficult to determine their duration.

In this class there are some animals which almost appear to be indestructible, and with which Fontana and Götze made so many important experiments. The former caused wheel-insects and hair-worms to be dried in the hot scorching sun, and to be parched in an oven; and at



the end of half a year he was able to revive these dried animals by pouring over them a little lukewarm water.

These experiments confirm our position that the more imperfect the organization, the stronger is the life. The case here is the same as in the seeds of plants ; and one may say that these first points of the animal creation are, in a certain measure, only the first shoots or seeds for the more perfect animal world.

Among those insects which have more of the animal, and a more finished organization, the power of reproduction cannot perform such wonders. But Nature here has fallen upon another wise establishment, which evidently prolongs their existence ; I mean that of metamorphosis or transformation. The insect exists, perhaps two, three, or four years, as a larva or worm ; it then becomes a pupa or nymph, and exists again in that deathlike state a considerable time, at the end of which it appears a completely finished being. It now first has eyes, a winged, often an elegant body ; and what stamps it principally with the mark of perfection, it is now first rendered fit for generation. This state, which may be called the time of its bloom, is, however, the shortest ; it soon dies ; for it has attained to the end of its destination.

I cannot here omit to remark, how much these phenomena coincide with the principles I laid down as the grounds on which the duration of life depends. In its first state as a worm, how imperfect its existence, and how little its motion ! It is impossible for it to generate, and its whole faculties seem to consist in those of eating and digesting ; for some caterpillars have so monstrous an appetite, that, in the course of twenty-four hours, they devour more than three times the weight of their bodies. Their self-consumption, then, must be exceedingly small, and their restoration prodigious. It need excite no surprise, therefore, that, in this condition, notwithstanding their diminutive size and imperfection, they can live so long. The case is the same in regard to their intermediate state as a chrysalis, when the animal lives

without nourishment, and is consumed neither externally nor internally. But in the last period of its existence, of its completely formed state as a winged ethereal being, its whole life seems to consist in continual motion and removal from one place to another; yet, though its self-consumption is incessant, we cannot think of nourishment or restoration, for many butterflies in this condition have no mouth. With such a refinement of organization, such a disproportion between what is added and what is taken away, no duration is possible; and it is confirmed by experience that the animal soon dies. Here, therefore, the same being exhibits to us, in a very evident manner, a picture of the most perfect as well as most imperfect life, and of the longer or shorter duration connected with them.

Amphibia, those cold transition beings, can prolong their existence to an extraordinary length; an advantage for which they are principally indebted to the tenacity of their life, that is, to the very intimate and difficult to be dissolved connexion of the vital power with the material part, and the weakness of their intensive life.

Of the tenacity of life we have instances truly astonishing. Tortoises have been seen to live a considerable time without the head; and frogs, when their hearts were torn out, have still continued to leap about. A tortoise has existed six whole weeks without any food; and this sufficiently shows how small its intensive life is, and how little need it has of restoration. Nay, it is proved that toads have been found alive enclosed in stones and blocks of marble.\* Whether they were shut up there in the egg,

\* In the year 1733, a toad was found in Sweden, seven ells deep, in a quarry, in the middle of a block of the hardest stone, to which people were obliged to force their way, with much labour, by means of chisels and the hammer. It was still alive, but exceedingly weak. Its skin was shrivelled, and covered here and there with a stony crust. See *Transactions of the Swedish Academy*, vol. iii. p. 285. It is most probable that the toad, when very young, had got into a small cleft of the stone, where it nourished itself with moisture and the insects which crept into it; that the cleft was at length closed up by sparry matter, and that the animal, by the time it grew up, was thus completely incruled.

or as perfect beings, both cases are equally astonishing; for what a number of years must have been necessary for the marble to generate, and before it could acquire its solidity!

This shows how much influence the power of regeneration has in prolonging life. A great many dangers and causes of death are thereby rendered harmless; and whole parts which have been lost are again renewed. To this belongs that phenomenon of the skin which we find among most animals of this class. Snakes, frogs, lizards, &c., cast their skin every year; and it appears that this method of becoming again young, contributes very much to their support and duration. Something of the like kind seems to prevail throughout the whole animal world: birds change their feathers as well as their bills, which is called moulting; insects transform themselves, and most quadrupeds change their hair and their claws.

The tortoise and crocodile, attain to the highest age, as far as we have yet been able to learn from observation.

The tortoise, an indolent, slow in all its motions, and phlegmatic animal, and which is so long in growing that in twenty years one can scarcely observe an increase of a few inches, lives to the age of a hundred years and more.

The crocodile, a large, strong, vigorous animal, enclosed in a hard coat of mail, incredibly voracious, and endowed with extraordinary powers of digestion, lives also very long; and, according to the affirmation of several travellers, is the only animal which grows as long as it exists.

It is astonishing what instances of great age may be found among fishes, the cold-blooded inhabitants of the waters. We know from the ancient Roman history, that in the imperial fish-ponds there were several lampreys (*muraenæ*) which had attained to their sixtieth year; and which had, at length, become so well acquainted and familiar with man that *Crassus orator unam ex illis deflexerit*.\*

\* That Crassus the orator shed tears for one of them when it died.

The pike, a dry, exceedingly voracious animal, and carp also, according to undeniable testimony, prolong their life to a hundred and fifty years. The salmon grows rapidly, and dies soon. On the other hand, the perch, the growth of which is slower, preserves its existence longer.

It appears here worthy of being remarked, that natural death occurs more rarely among fishes than in any other part of the animal kingdom. The law of the transition of one into another, according to the right of the strongest, prevails here far more generally. One devours another, the stronger the weaker; and one may assert that death exists less in the water, as the dying pass immediately into the substance of another living being, and consequently the intermediate state of death is less common than on land. Putrefaction takes place in the stomach of the stronger. This regulation is a proof of exalted and divine wisdom. If the innumerable millions of the inhabitants of the waters which die daily, remained only one day un-entombed, or, what is the same thing, not devoured, they would speedily diffuse abroad the most dreadful pestilential evaporation. In water, where vegetation, that great means of correcting animal putrefaction, exists in less extent, every cause of corruption must be guarded against; and on this account continual life must prevail.

Among birds, also, there are several species which live a long time; and to this, without doubt, the following circumstances contribute:—

1st. Birds are remarkably well clothed; for no covering can be more perfect or better calculated to preserve warmth than feathers.

2nd. They have, every year, a kind of reproduction, or renovation, which is called moulting. During that period, the bird appears to be somewhat sick; casts, at length, its old feathers, and acquires new ones. Many cast their bills also; an important part of renovation, as they are thereby put in a condition to feed themselves much better.

3rd. Birds enjoy the purest air, and in the greatest quantity.

4th. They are exposed to much motion; but their motion is the most healthful of all, as it consists of both active and passive; that is to say, they are suspended, and exert themselves only in moving forwards.

The golden eagle, a large strong animal with solid vessels, attains to a very great age. There have been instances of many living in menageries, above a hundred years.

The case is the same with the vulture and falcon, both carnivorous animals. A gentleman at London, a few years ago, received from the Cape of Good Hope one that had been caught with a golden collar, on which was inscribed in English, "His Majesty K. James of England, An. 1610." It had, therefore, been at liberty 182 years from the time of its escape. How old was it when it escaped? It was of the largest species of these birds, and possessed still no little strength and spirit; but it was remarked that its eyes were blind and dim, and that the feathers of its neck had become white.

The crow, a carnivorous bird with hard black flesh, can extend its life also to a hundred years; as can likewise the swan, an animal exceedingly well feathered, which feeds upon fish, and is fond of running water.

The parrot, in this respect, distinguishes itself in a particular manner. One has had instances of its living sixty years a prisoner with man, and how old may it not have been when it was caught? It is an animal which eats and digests almost all kinds of food, which changes its bill, and which has hard, dark-coloured flesh.

The peacock lives to the twentieth year. On the other hand, the cock, a hot, quarrelsome animal, does not exist nearly so long. Of a still shorter life is the sparrow. Small birds also live in general shorter. The blackbird and goldfinch live, at most, only to the twentieth year.

If we now turn our view towards the most perfect animals, the *mammalia*, those which approach nearest to

man, we shall find amongst these also a very striking difference of age.

That which attains to the greatest is perhaps the elephant; which, by its size, slow growth (for it grows to the thirtieth year), exceedingly hard skin and teeth, has the justest claim to longevity.

The age of the lion cannot be accurately determined; but we have reason to think that it is of considerable extent; because some have been found without any teeth.

The bear, though a great sleeper, and remarkably phlegmatic when awake, has, however, no great duration of existence. A poor comfort for those who imagine that they have found in indolence the secret for prolonging life.

The camel, on the other hand, a meagre, dry, active, exceedingly hardy animal, becomes old. It generally attains to the age of fifty, and sometimes of a hundred years.

The horse does not live more than about forty years. He is a large, strong animal, but not well covered with hair; he is therefore of greater sensibility. He may, however, ascribe his short life, in some measure, to the severity of man; for we do not yet know by experience how long he can live in a state of nature. The life of the ass has about the same duration. The mule, a production of both, is stronger lived, and becomes older.

What has been said respecting the great age of the stag is a fable. It lives thirty years, and perhaps a little over.

The bull, large and strong as he is, lives only a short period—about fifteen years, or at most twenty. Most of the smaller animals, such as sheep, goats, the fox, the hare, &c., live no more than seven or ten years; except dogs and swine, which can reach the age of fifteen or twenty.

From this variety of observations the following result may be drawn:—

The animal world have far more external and internal

the duration of life. This we observe to be the case in all hothouse plants, which, by warmth, manure, and other arts, are forced to a continual internal activity; so that they produce earlier, oftenre, and more exquisite fruit than is natural for them. The case is the same, when, without forcing, by external causes, a higher degree of perfection and delicacy than belonged to its nature is communicated to the internal organization of a plant, merely by certain operations and arts, such, for example, as ingrafting, propping, and the art used in regard to full flowers. This kind of culture shortens the duration also.

Cultivation, on the other hand, may be the greatest means of prolonging life, if it do not strengthen the intensive life of a plant, or if it retard and moderate in any manner its internal consumption; if it lessen the too great natural toughness or hardness of the organs or matter to such a degree that they continue longer pliable and proper for their functions; and if it keep off destructive influences, and supply it with better means of regeneration. Thus, by the help of culture, a being may attain to a greater extent of life than it could have acquired according to its natural state and destination.

The duration of the life of plants may be prolonged, therefore, in the three following ways:—

1st. If, by often pruning the branches, we guard against too rapid consumption. By these means we deprive the plant of a part of those organs by which it would exhaust too speedily its vital power, and we concentrate the power as it were within it.

2nd. If we thereby check, or at least retard its flowering, and prevent a waste of the power of generation. This, we know, is the highest degree of vital consumption among plants; and we thus doubly contribute to the prolongation of life—first, by preventing this power from being exhausted; and, secondly, by obliging it to return back and to act as a means of support or nourishment.

3rd. If we keep off the destructive influence of frost, the want of nourishment, and an irregular atmosphere,

and preserve it by art, in an uniform, moderate, mean condition. Though we hereby somewhat increase the intensive life, we nevertheless create a richer source of regeneration.

Lastly, the fourth grand point on which the duration of every being, and also of a plant, depends, is its greater or less capacity to *restore* itself and to renew its parts.

In this respect, the vegetable world may be divided into two grand classes. The first do not possess this capacity; and these are the annual plants, or those which live only a year, and which die immediately after they have performed the function of generation.

The second class, on the other hand, which possess this great faculty of regenerating themselves annually; of producing new leaves, branches, and flowers, can attain to the astonishing age of a thousand years and upwards. Such plants may be considered as organized masses of earth, from which an immense number of plants, but perfectly analogous to each mass, spring out every year. And in this regulation the wisdom of Nature appears great and divine.

When we reflect that, as experience teaches us, a period of eight or ten years is required in order to produce that degree of perfection in the organs and in the purification of the juices necessary in a tree before it can bring forth flowers and fruit, if it were subjected to the same laws of decay as other vegetable productions, and if a tree died immediately after it had generated, how ill-rewarded would the culture of it be; and how little proportion would the expense of preparation and time bear to the result! In such a case, fruit indeed would be uncommon.

To guard against this, Nature has wisely established, that the first plant acquires gradually such a consistence and solidity that at last the place of the earth is supplied by the trunk, from which an abundance of new plants spring out every year under the form of buds and buttons.

By this a double advantage is obtained. First, because



*sumption*, that is to say, according to the common mode of expression, the more imperfect the life of a being is, it will be so much the more lasting. On the other hand, the tenderer, finer, and more complex the organization, and the more perfect the life is, it will be of so much the less duration.

This is shown, in the clearest manner, by the following observations :—

1st. Zoophytes, or plant animals, whose whole organization consists in a mouth, a stomach, and a straight gut, have a life exceedingly tenacious and difficult to be destroyed.

2nd. All cold-blooded animals have, in general, a stronger and longer life than the warm-blooded ; or, what amounts to the same thing, those which do not breathe have in this an advantage over those which breathe. And for what reason ? Breathing is the source of internal heat, and accelerates consumption. The business of respiration increases, upon the whole, the perfection of a being ; but it increases also its consumption. An animal which breathes has as it were a double circulation, the common and the less through the lungs ; besides a double surface, which comes into continual contact with the atmosphere, the skin and the superficies of the lungs ; lastly, a far stronger irritability, and consequently a much greater self-consumption both internally and externally.

3rd. Animals which inhabit the water live longer, in general, than those that reside in the air ; and for this reason, because an animal in water evaporates very little, and because water does not consume nearly so much as the atmosphere.

• 4th. Lastly, the strongest proof what an astonishing effect lessening the external consumption has in the prolongation of life, is afforded by instances where that consumption has been rendered totally impossible. I mean those of toads enclosed in blocks of stone, where, by the external consumption being suspended, they preserved their life so much the longer. In that state nothing could

evaporate, nothing could be dissolved; for the small quantity of air which was perhaps shut up with them, must have soon become so much saturated as to be incapable of receiving anything more. On this account the animal could exist so long without nourishment; for the need of nourishment arises from the loss which we sustain by evaporation and consumption. In such a state, where everything remains as it was, no reparation is required. By such means the vital power and organization might be retained perhaps a hundred times longer than in the natural condition.

The last principle on which the duration of life is founded, more perfect restoration, is fully confirmed likewise in this kingdom of Nature.

The highest degree of restoration is the *reproduction of entirely new organs*.

This power is found, in a wonderful degree, in the class of plant-animals, worms and amphibia, in short of those animals which have cold blood and no bones, or only such as are cartilaginous. And amongst all these animals there exists a most remarkable duration of life.

Somewhat of the same nature is the casting of scales among fishes; of the skin among snakes, crocodiles, frogs, &c.; of the feathers and bill among birds: and we always observe, that the more perfect this renovation is, the duration of life is proportionably longer.

A highly important circumstance, however, in regard to restoration, is nourishment; and here a most essential difference is manifested between the vegetable and animal world. All plants derive their nourishment from without: on the other hand, it is an invariable law of Nature, among animals, that the nourishment must first pass into a cavity or bag, commonly called the stomach, destined for that purpose, before it can be received into the mass of the juices and become a part of the animal; and the imperfect polype, as well as the elephant, has these characteristics of the animal, a *mouth*, and a *stomach*.

It is this which forms the grand basis of the animal

world; the characterizing difference between animals and plants; and upon which is originally grounded the superior advantage of individuality; of internal, more perfect, and more expanded life. Among animals, the substance which is received may obtain a far higher degree of preparation than among plants; the roots (the lacteal vessels) are, as it were, within; and receive the nourishing juices, already assimilated and purified, through the intestines. Animals, therefore, are subject to more secretions and excretions than plants; and, for the same reason, the course of the nourishing juices and of all movements proceeds, among animals, from the internal to the external part, and among plants from the external to the internal. For this reason, also, the progress of death, in an animal, is from the external to the internal parts: in a plant the case is reversed; and one may often see trees without pith or internal substance, of which nothing exists but the bark, and which, however, still continue to live. For the above reason, likewise, animals can receive nourishment far more various, and restore themselves in a much more perfect manner, and, by these means, counterbalance the stronger self-consumption.

## CHAPTER V.

Duration of the life of man. Apparently incredible age of the patriarchs explained. Age of the world has no influence on the duration of human life. Instances of great age among the Jews, Greeks, and Romans. Tables of the Census under Vespasian. Instances of great age among kings, emperors, and popes. Frederick II. Among hermits and monks; philosophers and men of letters; poets and artists. Instances of the greatest age to be found only among country people, hunters, gardeners, soldiers, and sailors. Few to be found among physicians. Shortest life. Difference of age according to the climate.

LET us now proceed to the grand source of our information, the history of man; and let me there collect examples which may be of utility to the present research.

I shall, therefore, lay before my readers the most remarkable instances of the greatest age among mankind; and we shall thence see in what climate, under what favourable circumstances, in what condition, and what state both of mind and body man has attained to the highest degree of longevity: an agreeable review, which will make known to us a peculiar part of the history of the world, the history of the age of man, and the venerable gallery of the Nestors of ancient periods and nations. I shall occasionally add a few short characteristics, to give at the same time a hint how far character and temperament have an influence on the duration of life.

It is commonly believed that, during the early periods of the world, the lives of its inhabitants were more youthful and more perfect; that these primitive men had a gigantic size, incredible strength, and a most astonishing duration of life. A variety of such notions were long prevalent among mankind; and to these we are indebted

for the origin of many romantic tales. Some have not hesitated seriously to ascribe to our forefather Adam, the height of nine hundred yards, and the age of almost a thousand years. But the accurate and rational investigation of modern philosophy has converted the supposed bones of giants, found in different parts of the earth, into those of the elephant and rhinoceros; and acute theologians have shown that the chronology of the early ages was not the same as that used at present. Some, particularly Hensler, have proved, with the highest probability, that the year till the time of Abraham consisted only of three months; that it was afterwards extended to eight; and that it was not till the time of Joseph that it was made to consist of twelve. These assertions are, in a certain degree, confirmed by some of the eastern nations, who still reckon only three months to the year; and besides, it would be altogether inexplicable why the life of man should have been shortened one half immediately after the flood. It would be equally inexplicable why the patriarchs did not marry till their sixtieth, seventieth, and even hundredth year; but this difficulty vanishes when we reckon these ages according to the before-mentioned standard, which will give the twentieth or thirtieth year; and consequently, the same periods at which people marry at present. The whole, therefore, according to this explanation, assumes a different appearance. The sixteen hundred years before the flood will become four hundred and fourteen; and the nine hundred years (the highest recorded) which Methuselah lived, will be reduced to two hundred—an age which is not impossible, and to which some men in modern times have nearly approached.

In profane history, also, we have an account of many heroes and Arcadian kings of those periods who attained to the age of several hundred years; but these pretended instances of longevity can be explained in the same manner.

With the period of Abraham, a period when history seems first to be established on more certain grounds, we

find mention of a duration of life which can be still attained, and which no longer appears extraordinary, especially when we consider the temperate manner in which the patriarchs lived; and that, as they were nomades or a wandering people, they were much exposed to the free open air.

From the history of the Jews we are enabled to collect the following facts. Abraham, a man of great and resolute mind, who was fortunate in all his undertakings, attained to the age of 175 years; his son Isaac, a chaste, peaceable man, and fond of tranquillity, to 180; Jacob, who was also a lover of peace, but crafty and cunning, lived only 147; Ishmael, a warrior, 137; Sarah, the only female of the ancient world with whose duration of life we are acquainted, lived 127 years; Joseph, a man of great prudence and political talents, much afflicted in his youth, but greatly honoured in his latter days, lived to the age of 110.

Moses, a man of extraordinary strength and spirit, rich in deeds but weak in words, carried his life, during which he was exposed to great care and fatigue, to the age of 120. But he even complains that the life of man endures only threescore and ten, or at most fourscore years; and we hence find that, in regard to age, the case was exactly the same three thousand years ago as it is at present.

The warlike and ever active Joshua lived to the age of 110. Eli, the high priest, a corpulent, phlegmatic man, of a resigned disposition, lived to be only 90; but Elisha, severe towards others and towards himself, who despised convenience and riches, lived far above 100. In the latter period of the Jewish state, the prophet Simeon, a man full of hope and confidence in God, was distinguished by a life of 90 years.

However replete with fables the history of the Egyptians may be, the age of their kings, recorded from the earliest periods, presents nothing remarkable. The longest reign is somewhat above fifty years.

If we judge according to the account of Lucian, we must form a very high idea of the great age of the Seres, or the ancient Chinese. They are expressly called *Macrobi*; and Lucian ascribes their longevity to their drinking water in great abundance. Is it not probable that they may, even then, have been acquainted with tea?

Among the Greeks we find several instances of great age. The wise Solon, a man of much magnanimity, depth of thought and ardent patriotism, though not indifferent in regard to the enjoyments of life, attained the age of 80.

Epimenides of Crete is said to have lived 157 years. The poet Anacreon, so fond of mirth and jollity, lived to the age of 80; as did also Sophocles and Pindar. Gorgias of Leontium, a great orator, a man who had travelled much, and who spent a great deal of his time in the company of young people and in giving them instruction, prolonged his life to the age of 108 years. Protagoras of Abdera, an orator and traveller also, lived 90; and Isocrates, a man of great temperance and modesty, lived 98. Democritus, the friend and searcher of Nature, a man also of a good temper and serene mind, lived 109 years; and the frugal, but slovenly Diogenes, 90. Zeno, the founder of the Stoical sect, and a master in the art of self-denial, attained nearly to the age of 100 years; and Plato, one of the most divine geniuses that ever existed, and a friend to rest and calm meditation, to that of 81. Pythagoras, who in his doctrine recommended good regimen, moderation of the passions, and the gymnastic exercises, became also very old. He used to divide the life of man into four equal parts. From the first to the twentieth year he called him a child, a man begun; from the twentieth to the fortieth, a young man; from the fortieth to the sixtieth, a man; from the sixtieth to the eightieth, an old or declining man; and after this period he reckoned him no more among the living, let him live to whatever age he might.

Among the Romans the following instances deserve to be remarked:—

M. Valerius Corvinus, a man of great boldness and courage, extremely popular, and always fortunate, was above the age of 100. Orbilius, the celebrated Orbilius, first a soldier and then a pedagogue, but who always exercised military severity, attained, in this kind of life, to the age of above 100 years. How far Hermippus, the instructor of young maids, carried his life, we have seen before. Fabius, well known on account of his delay, showed, by an age of 90 years, that something may be gained even from death by the same means. And Cato, that man with an iron body and iron mind, fond of a country life, and an enemy to physicians, lived to the age of above 90.

We have likewise remarkable instances of the longevity of Roman ladies. Terentia, the wife of Cicero, notwithstanding her many misfortunes, cares, and the gout, with which she was tormented, lived to the age of 103. And Livia, the wife of Augustus, an imperious, passionate, but fortunate woman, attained to that of 90.

It is particularly worthy of remark, that several instances occur of Roman actresses who became old; an advantage which they have now unfortunately lost, and which seems to show that more vital consumption is connected with their occupation at present than formerly. One Luceja, who came on the stage very young, performed a whole century, and even made her appearance publicly when in her 112th year. Galeria Copiola, an actress, and dancer also, was 90 years old when she first performed in the theatre; and she was again brought forward as a wonder, in order to compliment Pompey. But this even was not the last time of her acting; for she appeared once more, to show her respect for Augustus.

A very valuable collection in regard to the duration of life in the time of the emperor Vespasian, has been preserved to us by Pliny, from the records of the Census, a source perfectly sure and worthy of credit. It there appears, that in the year when that numbering of the people took place, the seventy-sixth of our era, there were



living in that part of Italy which lies between the Apennines and the Po, only 124 men who had attained the age of 100 years and upwards,—viz., fifty-four of 100, fifty-seven of 110; two of 125; four of 130; four of from 135 to 137, and three of 140. Besides these, there were in Parma five men, three of whom were 120, and two 130; in Placentia, one of 130; at Faventia, a woman of 132; and in Vellejadium, a small town near Placentia, there lived ten persons, six of whom had attained to the age of 110, and four to that of 120.

The bills of mortality also of the celebrated Ulpian agree in a most striking manner with ours, and in particular with those of great cities. From these it appears that one might with great propriety compare Rome to London, in regard to the probability of the duration of life.

We have sufficient reason, therefore, to believe that the duration of life in the time of Moses, the Greeks, and the Romans, was invariably the same as at present; and that the age of the earth has no influence on the longevity of its inhabitants, that difference excepted which may be produced by the cultivation of its surface, and the difference of climate that may thence arise.

Thus, for example, it is certain that in Italy, at present, neither so many nor so old people are to be found as in the time of Vespasian; but the reason is, that the climate then, on account of the woods and forests, was much colder,\* and rendered the men more robust. It is also not improbable that the natural warmth of the earth itself may alter, and be accumulated sometimes in one region and diminished in another.

The result of this research will therefore be, that man can still attain to the same age as ever. The difference only is, that more attained to old age formerly than at present.

Let us now take a view of the different states and con-

\* Of this we have several instances. Pliny, for example, speaks of winters when the wine was congealed in the cellars, and the Tyber frozen to the bottom.

ditions of men, and, in this respect, turn our eyes in particular to modern times.

To begin with emperors, kings, and, in short, the great ones of the earth: has Nature, which has conferred upon them, in the highest degree, all the advantages and enjoyments of this world, bestowed upon them also her best gift, a longer duration of life? Unfortunately not. Neither ancient nor modern history informs us that this prerogative belongs exclusively to them. In ancient history we find only a few kings who attained to their eightieth year; and this is equally the case in the modern. In the whole catalogue of Roman and German emperors, reckoning from Augustus to the present time, which includes altogether above two hundred, we find (the two first, Augustus and Tiberius, excepted) only four who arrived at the age of 80; viz., Gordian, Valerian, Anastasius, and Justinian.

Augustus, a man of a peaceful, moderate disposition, though quick and lively in action, temperate in the enjoyments of the table, but more susceptible therefore of the pleasure arising from the arts and the sciences, attained to the age of seventy-six. He used none but the simplest food; ate only when he had an appetite; never drank above a pint of wine; and considered mirth and good company as the best seasoning of his meals. He possessed a serene mind, was a great favourite of fortune, and entertained such ideas respecting the term of life, that he said to his friends a little before his death, *Plaudite, amici!* "Applaud, my friends; the farce is ended!" a disposition of mind exceedingly favourable to longevity. In the thirtieth year of his age he was attacked by so severe and dangerous a disease that his life was despaired of. It was a sort of nervous disorder, which, by the warmth and hot baths recommended to him by his ordinary physicians, must have been rendered still worse. Antonius Musa resolved to treat his case in a manner totally different. He obliged him to keep himself perfectly cool, and to use the cold bath; and by these means his health was again soon.

restored. This disorder, as well as the useful change which it effected in his mode of living, contributed very much, in all probability, to the prolongation of his life.

From this account we learn also, that the method by the cold bath is improperly called the English method, since it appears to be of so great antiquity.

The emperor Tiberius lived two years longer. He was of a violent temper, but *vir lentis maxillis*,\* as Augustus called him; a friend to voluptuousness, though still attached to regimen, and, even amidst enjoyment, not inattentive to his health; so that he used to say he considered a man as a fool, who, after the thirtieth year of his age, consulted physicians respecting diet; because every one, with the least attention, must before that period have discovered what was useful and what prejudicial to him.

Aurengzeb, that celebrated conqueror, attained to the age of 100; but he is not to be considered so much a king as a nomade or wanderer.

Great age is equally uncommon in the royal and princely families of modern times. We must, however, except the kings of France, of the house of Bourbon, two of whom, who succeeded each other, attained the age of 70.

Frederick II., that great prince, one of the most important instances in modern times, must not be here omitted. He was great in everything, even in what related to his medicine. He not only attained to an age very rare among kings—that of 76, but, what is still of greater weight, attained to it amidst a life more exposed to care, labour, and fatigue, than that perhaps of any other man who ever existed, as he spent twenty years of it in active war, during which he submitted to all the toils of a common soldier; but with this difference, that, as commander-in-chief he thought for all, and frequently passed the night, while others were enjoying repose, in

\* Literally: "A man of slow jaws," which may mean that he masticated slowly, as well as that he was moderate in the quantity of his food.—EDITOR.

the deepest meditation, and in forming new plans for his future operations.

The ecclesiastical princes, in this respect, have not been more fortunate. Of three hundred popes, who may be reckoned up, no more than five attained to or exceeded the age of eighty, though they possessed the advantage of obtaining the pontifical chair at a late period, and had therefore a greater probability of enjoying longevity.

An extraordinary number of instances, however, may be found among the hermits and monks, who, with the strictest regimen, self-denial, and abstraction, while they divested themselves of all human passions, and avoided such intercourse as might tend to excite them, led a life of contemplation, but united with bodily exercise and the enjoyment of free air. Thus the apostle John attained to the age of 93; Paul the hermit, by means of an almost incredibly severe regimen in a grotto, to that of 113; and St. Anthony to that of 105. Athanasius and Jerome also exceeded the age of 80.\* In modern times, since mental abstraction, self-denial, and temperance have undergone some variations, instances of this kind are become more uncommon.

Deep-thinking philosophers have at all times been distinguished by their great age, especially when their philosophy was occupied in the study of Nature, and afforded them the divine pleasure of discovering new and important truths: the purest enjoyment, a beneficial exaltation of ourselves, and a kind of restoration which may be ranked among the principal means of prolonging the life of a perfect being. The most ancient instances are to be found among the Stoics and the Pythagoreans, according to whose ideas subduing the passions and sensibility, with the observation of strict regimen, were the most essential duties of a philosopher. We have already considered the example of a Plato and an Isocrates. Apollonius of Tyana, an accomplished man, endowed with extraordinary powers

\* St. David lived to the age of 146; Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, to that of 88; and Wilfred, Bishop of Hexham, through a turbulent career, to 76.—EDITOR.

both of body and mind, who, by the Christians, was considered as a magician, and by the Greeks and Romans as a messenger of the gods, in his regimen a follower of Pythagoras, and a friend to travelling, was above 100 years of age. Xenophilus, a Pythagorean also, lived 106 years. The philosopher Demonax, a man of the most severe manners and uncommon stoical apathy, lived likewise 100. Being asked, a little before his death, how he wished to be buried, he replied, "Give yourself no concern on that point; the smell will soon bury the carcass." "But," returned his friends, "do you wish, then, to become food to the dogs and the birds?" "Why not?" replied he; "during my whole life I have endeavoured as much as I could to be serviceable to man, why should I not, after my death, be of some use also to animals?"

Even in modern times philosophers seem to have obtained this pre-eminence, and the deepest thinkers appear in that respect to have enjoyed, in a higher degree, the fruits of their mental tranquillity. Kepler and Bacon both attained to a great age; and Newton, who found all his happiness and pleasure in the higher spheres, attained to the age of 84.\* Euler, a man of incredible industry, whose works on the most abstruse subjects amount to above three hundred, approached near to the same age: and Kant, the first philosopher now alive, still shows that philosophy not only can preserve life, but that it is the most faithful companion of the greatest age, and an inexhaustible source of happiness to one's self and to others.†

Academicians, in this respect, have been particularly distinguished. I need mention only the venerable Fontenelle, who wanted but one year of a hundred, and that Nestor, Formey, both perpetual secretaries, the former of the French, and the latter of the Berlin Academy.

We find, also, many instances of long life among school-masters; so that one might almost believe that continual

\* Kepler only reached the age of 59; Bacon attained that of 78; and Euler, 77.—EDITOR.

† Kant died in 1804, having lived to the age of 80.—EDITOR.

intercourse with youth may contribute something towards our renovation and support.

But poets and artists, in short all those fortunate mortals whose principal occupation leads them to be conversant with the sports of fancy and self-created worlds, and whose whole life, in the properest sense, is an agreeable dream, have a particular claim to a place in the history of longevity. We have already seen to what a great age Anacreon, Sophocles, and Pindar attained. Young, Voltaire, Bodmer, Haller, Metastasio, Gleim, Utz, and Oeser, all lived to be very old;\* and I here flatter myself

\* The following short list of the ages of distinguished men may be interesting to the reader in this place; for a more complete catalogue, arranged according to the classes of science and literature upon which they shed their light, he is referred to Madden's "Infirmities of Genius."

Tasso . . . . .	51	Galileo . . . . .	78
Virgil . . . . .	52	Swift . . . . .	78
Shakspeare . . . . .	52	Roger Bacon . . . . .	78
Moliere . . . . .	53	Corneille . . . . .	78
Dante . . . . .	56	Marmontel . . . . .	79
Pope . . . . .	56	Thucydides . . . . .	80
Ovid . . . . .	57	Juvenal . . . . .	80
Horace . . . . .	57	Young . . . . .	80
Racine . . . . .	59	Plato . . . . .	81
Demosthenes . . . . .	59	Buffon . . . . .	81
Lavater . . . . .	60	Goethe . . . . .	82
Galvani . . . . .	61	Claude . . . . .	82
Bocaccio . . . . .	62	West . . . . .	82
Fenelon . . . . .	63	Franklin . . . . .	84
Aristotle . . . . .	63	Metastasio . . . . .	84
Cuvier . . . . .	64	Herschell . . . . .	84
Milton . . . . .	66	Anacreon . . . . .	85
Rousseau . . . . .	66	Newton . . . . .	85
Erasmus . . . . .	69	Voltaire . . . . .	85
Cervantes . . . . .	69	Halley . . . . .	86
Beaumarchais . . . . .	69	Sophocles . . . . .	90
Dryden . . . . .	70	Leeuwenhoeck . . . . .	91
Petrarch . . . . .	70	Hans Sloane . . . . .	93
Lesage . . . . .	70	Whiston . . . . .	95
Linnæus . . . . .	71	Michael Angelo . . . . .	96
Locke . . . . .	73	Titian . . . . .	96
La Fontaine . . . . .	74	Herodias . . . . .	100
Handel . . . . .	75	Fontenelle . . . . .	100
Reaumur . . . . .	75	Georgias . . . . .	107

—EDITOR.

with the hope, and I shall no doubt be joined in my wish by every one of my readers, that Wieland, the prince of the German poets, may afford the newest confirmation of this position.\*

The most extraordinary instances of longevity are to be found, however, only among those classes of mankind who, amidst bodily labour, and in the open air, lead a simple life agreeable to nature, such as farmers, gardeners, hunters, soldiers, and sailors. In these situations man still attains to the age of 140, and even 150. I cannot here deny myself the pleasure of giving a more particular account of some of these instances; for, in cases of this kind, the most trifling circumstance is often interesting, and may be of importance.

In the year 1670 died Henry Jenkins, of Yorkshire. He remembered the battle of Floddenfield in 1513, and at that time he was twelve years of age. It was proved, from the registers of the Chancery and other Courts, that he had appeared, 140 years before his death, as an evidence, and had an oath administered to him. At the time of his death he was, therefore, 169 years old. His last occupation was fishing; and when above the age of 100, he was able to swim across rapid rivers.

Next to him, in point of age, is another Englishman, Thomas Parr, of Shropshire. He was a poor farmer's servant, and obliged to maintain himself by daily labour. When above 120 years of age, he married a widow for his second wife, who lived with him twelve years, and who asserted that during that time he never betrayed any signs of infirmity or age. Till his 130th year he performed all his usual work, and was accustomed even to thresh. Some years before his death, his eyes and memory began to fail; but his hearing and senses continued sound to the last. In his 152nd year his fame had reached London; and as the King was desirous of seeing so great a rarity, he was induced to undertake a journey thither.

\* Wieland died insane at the age of 80, in January, 1813.—  
EDITOR.

This, in all probability, shortened his existence, which he otherwise might have preserved some years longer; for he was treated at Court in so royal a manner, and his mode of living was so totally changed that he died soon after, at London, in 1635. He was 152 years and nine months old, and had lived under nine kings of England. What was most remarkable in regard to this man is, that when his body was opened by Dr. Harvey, his internal organs were found to be in the most perfect state, nor was the least symptom of decay to be discovered in them. His cartilages even were not ossified, as is the case in all old people. The smallest cause of death had not yet settled in his body; and he died merely of a plethora, because he had been too well treated.

This Parr is a proof that, in many families, a constitution so favourable to longevity may transmit a remarkably good *stamen vitæ*. His great grandson died at Cork, a few years ago, at the age of 103.

The following instance is almost of the same kind:—A Dane, named Draakenberg, born in 1626, served as a seaman in the Royal Navy till the 91st year of his age, and spent fifteen years of his life as a slave in Turkey, and in the greatest misery. When he was 111, and had settled to enjoy tranquillity, he resolved to marry, and united himself to a woman of threescore. He, however, outlived her a long time; and, in his 130th year, fell in love with a young country girl, who, as may well be supposed, rejected his proposal. He then tried his fortune with several others, but as he had no better success, he at length resolved to continue single, and in that condition lived sixteen years. He died in the year 1772, in the 146th year of his age. He was a man of a rather violent temper, and exhibited frequent proofs of his strength during the last years of his life.

In the year 1757, J. Effingham died in Cornwall, in the 144th year of his age. He was born of poor parents in the reign of James I., and had been brought up to labour from his infancy. He had served long as a soldier and corporal;



and had been present at the battle of Hochstedt. He at length returned to the place of his nativity, and worked as a day-labourer till his death. It is to be remarked, that in his youth he never drank strong, heating liquors; that he always lived remarkably temperately, and seldom ate flesh. Till his 100th year he scarcely knew what sickness was; and, eight days before his end, he had walked three miles.

In the year 1792, died, in the Duchy of Holstein, an industrious day-labourer, named Stender, in the 103rd year of his age. His food, for the most part, was nothing but oatmeal and butter-milk. He rarely ate flesh; and what he used was always much salted. He scarcely ever had thirst, and therefore drank very seldom. He was fond of smoking tobacco. In his old age he first began to drink tea, and sometimes coffee. He lost his teeth early. He was never sick; and could not be out of humour; that is to say, it was physically impossible that his bile should ever overflow. He avoided with great care every cause of strife or contention. He had the greatest trust in Providence; and this was his consolation and support in all his misfortunes and troubles. His chief dependence always was in the goodness of God.

One of the most singular instances that, amidst the fickliest sports of fortune, continual danger, and the most destructive influences, the life of man may be preserved to an incredible length, is the following:—An old soldier, named Mittelstedt, died in Prussia, in the year 1792, in the 112th year of his age. This man was born at Fissahn, in that country, in the month of June, 1681; and was lost at the gaming-table by his master, who in one evening staked his whole equipage and six more servants. He then entered into the army, and served as a soldier sixty-seven years. He was present in all the campaigns under Frederick I., Frederick William I., and Frederick II., and, in particular, in those of the seven years' war; and had been engaged in seventeen general actions, in which he braved numberless dangers and received many wounds.

In the seven years' war his horse was shot under him, and he was then taken prisoner by the Russians. After supporting all these difficulties, he married; and having lost two wives successively, he married a third, in 1790, when he was in the 110th year of his age. A little before his death he was still able to walk two miles, every month, in order to receive his small pension.

The same year, died at Neus, in the Archbishopric of Cologne, H. Kauper, a veteran of 112. He was a man of a strong make; had been accustomed to walk a little every day; could read till his death without spectacles, and retained the use of his senses to the last.

Helen Gray died a few years ago, in the 105th year of her age. She was of small stature, exceedingly lively, peaceable, and good-tempered, and a few years before her death acquired new teeth.

Thomas Garrick was alive last year (1795), in the county of Fife, in the 108th year of his age. He still possessed great vigour; and was celebrated, as he always had been, on account of his extraordinary appetite. For twenty years he had never been confined to his bed by sickness.

Not long ago there was still alive at Tacony, near Philadelphia, a shoemaker named R. Glen, in the 114th year of his age. He was by birth a Scotchman, had seen King William III., enjoyed the perfect use of his sight and memory, ate and drank with a keen appetite, had a good digestion, laboured the whole week, and on Sunday walked to hear divine service in the church at Philadelphia. His third wife was still alive; she was thirty years of age, and lived happily with her husband.

A certain baron, Baravicino de Capellis, died in 1770, at Meran, in Tyrol, at the age of 104. He had been married to four wives: the first he married in his fourteenth, and the last in his eighty-fourth year. By his fourth wife he had seven children, and when he died she was pregnant with the eighth. The vigour of his body and mind did not forsake him till the last months of his life. He never used spectacles, and when at a great age would frequently

walk a couple of miles. His usual food was eggs; he never tasted boiled flesh; sometimes he ate a little roasted, but always in very small quantity: and he drank abundance of tea with *rosa-solis*\* and sugar-candy.

Anthony Senish, a farmer of the village of Puy, in Limoges, died in 1770, in the 111th year of his age. He laboured till within fourteen days of his death; had still his teeth and his hair; and his sight had not failed him. His usual food was chestnuts and Turkish corn. He had never been bled, nor used any medicine.

These are all the instances of great age, in modern times, with which I am acquainted. Persons of 100 years I omit, for these are more common. A carpenter died a few years ago at Bürgel, near this place, in his 104th year. He worked daily till his death; and his favourite employment, at last, was spinning yarn. One day, as he was sitting at his wheel, his daughter observed it motionless; she immediately went up to him, and found him dead.

Physicians, who so abundantly dispense to others the means of health and life, ought to claim here a distinguished place. But unfortunately this is not the case. It may be said of them, in general: *Aliis inserviando consumuntur; aliis medendo moriuntur.*†

At any rate, mortality is greater among practical physicians than perhaps among men of any other profession. They have the least opportunity of observing those prudential rules and precautions, for preserving health, which they lay down to others; and there are few employments in which the powers both of the body and mind are exposed to so much consumption as in this. Head and feet must be always exercised in common. But the greatest mortality prevails during the first ten years of their practice. A physician who has fortunately withstood that period, attains to a certain strength of constitution, a kind of insensibility to fatigue and the causes of disease; by

\* A plant having the character of being a "cordial."—EDITOR.

† In serving others they are consumed; in healing others they are destroyed.—EDITOR.

custom, noxious effluvia and the poison of infectious disorders become less prejudicial; and he acquires more indifference for the heart-melting scenes of woe, and the numberless miseries, the consequences of vice and moral evil, which his business condemns him to be a daily spectator of: and thus a physician who has luckily passed his time of probation, may become an old man.

A striking instance of this is afforded by our predecessor, Hippocrates, who lived to the age of 109. His whole life was employed in the study of Nature, in travelling, and in visiting the sick; but he passed more of his time in small villages and in the country than in great cities. Galen, Crato, Forestus, Plater, Hoffman, Haller, Van Swieten and Boerhaave all attained to a considerable age.\*

In regard to shortness of life, miners, and those employed in melting-houses, are particularly distinguished, as well as those who live under the earth, or are continually exposed to poisonous effluvia. In some mines, which contain much arsenic and cobalt, the workmen do not live to be older than thirty.

I shall now take a short view of the difference of age, as arising from climate, or rather the nature of the soil.

Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and England have, in modern times, without doubt, produced the oldest men.†

\* The following list embraces a few distinguished names of medical philosophers who have attained an advanced age:—

Boerhaave . . . . .	70	Harvey . . . . .	81
Haller . . . . .	70	Mead . . . . .	81
Tissot . . . . .	70	Duhamel . . . . .	82
Gall . . . . .	71	Astruc . . . . .	88
Darwin . . . . .	72	Hoffman . . . . .	83
Van Swieten . . . . .	72	Pinel . . . . .	84
Fallopius . . . . .	72	Swedenborg . . . . .	85
Jenner . . . . .	75	Morgagni . . . . .	89
Heister . . . . .	75	Heberden . . . . .	92
Cullen . . . . .	78	Ruysch . . . . .	93
Galen . . . . .	79	Hippocrates . . . . .	109
Spallanzani . . . . .	79		

—EDITOR.

† In England, during the seven years 1838—44, there died at the age of 100 and upwards, 788 persons; namely, 256 males, and 532

Instances of some who attained to the age of 130, 140, 150, have occurred in these countries.

However favourable a northern climate may be to longevity, too great a degree of cold is, on the other hand, prejudicial to it. In Iceland, and the northern parts of Asia, such as Siberia, men attain at most to the age of sixty or seventy.

Besides England and Scotland, Ireland is celebrated for the longevity of its inhabitants. In Dunsford, a small place in that country, there were living, at one time, eighty persons above the age of fourscore. And Lord Bacon says there was not a village in the whole island, as he believed, in which there was not one man upwards of eighty.

In France, instances of longevity are not so abundant; though a man died there, in the year 1757, at the age of 121.

The case is the same in Italy; yet in the northern province of Lombardy there have been some instances of great age.

In Spain, also, there have been some instances, though seldom, of men who lived to the age of 110.

That healthy and beautiful country, Greece, is still as celebrated as it was formerly in regard to longevity. Tournefort found, at Athens, an old consul who was 118 years of age. The island Naxos is particularly celebrated on this account.

Even in Egypt and India there are instances of long life, particularly among the Bramins, Anchorites, and Hermits, who detest the indolence and intemperance of the other inhabitants of these countries.

Ethiopia formerly was much celebrated for its longevity; but a contrary account is given of it by Bruce.

Some districts of Hungary are particularly distin-

females: giving an average of 112½ annually. Of this number a very small proportion, namely 72 (27 males, 45 females), were returned from London; while 137 (43 males, 94 females) were inhabitants of Wales.—EDITOR.

guished by the great age of the people who reside in them.

Germany contains abundance of old persons; but it affords few instances of very long life.

Even in Holland people may become old; but this is not often the case, and few live there to the age of a hundred.

## CHAPTER VI.

Result of the above observations. Age of the world has no influence on that of its inhabitants. Influence of climate and of the atmosphere. Islands and peninsulas. Countries in Europe most favourable to longevity. Advantages of temperance. The two most dreadful extremes of mortality in modern times. Moderation in all things has great effect in prolonging life. State of marriage. Female sex. Industry. Frugality. Civilization. Rural life. Renovation possible. Extent of human life determined. Absolute and relative duration of it. Tables respecting the latter.

THAT I may not tire the patience of my readers by too great a multitude of examples, I shall here stop, and, in future, introduce them only occasionally, as the subject may require.

Let me be permitted, therefore, to collect the general result of the observations above made, and to draw from them the following important conclusions:—

I. The age of the world hitherto has had no perceptible influence on that of man; and people may still become as old as in the time of Abraham, and even of earlier epochs. There certainly have been periods when men lived sometimes longer and sometimes shorter; but this evidently did not arise from the world, but from man himself. When men were in a savage state, simple, laborious children of Nature, and much exposed to the open air, as shepherds, hunters, and farmers, great age was very common among them; but when they began gradually to despise the dictates of Nature, to study refinement, and to indulge in luxury, the duration of their life became shorter. The same people, however, restored by a revolution to their former rude state, and to manners more agreeable to

Nature, can again attain to their ancient longevity. These, consequently, are unsettled periods, which only pass away and return. Mankind, in general, do not suffer by them, and retain that duration of life which is appointed for them.

II. Man, as we have above seen, can, in almost all climates, in the frigid or torrid zone, attain to a great age. The only difference seems to be, that this is the case in some much more than in others; and that though man can attain to a great age, people in general do not attain to the greatest.

III. Even in districts where mortality in general is very great, individuals may attain to a greater age than in places where general mortality is less. I shall, by way of example, mention the warm countries of the East. There, mortality, upon the whole, is very small: hence their extraordinary population; and infancy, in particular, suffers there much less on account of the continually uniform and pure temperature of the atmosphere. Yet a much smaller proportion of old people are found in these countries than in the northern, where mortality in general is greater.

IV. Places, the situation of which is high, have, in general, more and purer air than those which stand low; though here, also, there is a certain limitation, and the rule cannot be thus laid down: the higher the better. The greatest degree of height, the glaciers, is, on the contrary, prejudicial to health; and Switzerland, without doubt the highest land in Europe, has produced fewer instances of longevity than Scotland. For this there are two reasons: First, the atmosphere at a great height is too dry, ethereal, and pure, and consumes, therefore, speedier. Secondly, the temperature of it is too variable; heat and cold succeed each other too rapidly; and nothing is more unfavourable to duration of life than very sudden changes.

V. In cold climates, men in general become older than in warm; and for two reasons: First, because, in warm countries vital consumption is greater; and secondly,



because, in cold countries, the climate, being more temperate, checks vital consumption. This, however, is the case only in a certain degree. By the highest cold, such as that of Greenland, Nova Zembla, &c., the duration of life is shortened.

VI. Uniformity in the state of the atmosphere, particularly in regard to heat, cold, gravity, and lightness, contributes, in a very considerable degree, to the duration of life. Countries, therefore, where sudden and great variations in the barometer and thermometer are usual, cannot be favourable to longevity. Such countries may be healthy, and many men may become old in them; but they will not attain to a great age, for all rapid variations are so many internal revolutions; and these occasion an astonishing consumption, both of the powers and the organs. In this respect Germany is particularly distinguished; for its situation renders it subject to a continual mixture of heat and cold, of northern and southern climate, where one often experiences, in the course of the same day, both frost and the utmost heat; and where the month of March may be extremely warm, and that of May accompanied with snow. This uncertainty of the climate of Germany is undoubtedly the principal cause that, notwithstanding the healthfulness of its situation in other points of view, and though in general people attain there to a considerable age, instances of very great age occur much more rarely than in neighbouring countries lying almost under the same degree of latitude.

VII. Too high a degree of dryness, as well as too great moisture, are unfavourable to duration of life. Air, therefore, which contains a mixture of fine moisture, is the best for attaining to great age. The reasons are as follow: Moist air, being in part already saturated, has less attractive power over bodies; that is to say, consumes them less. Besides, in a moist atmosphere there is always more uniformity of temperature; and fewer rapid revolutions of heat and cold are possible. Lastly, an atmosphere somewhat moist keeps the organs longer pliable

and youthful; whereas that which is too dry brings on much sooner aridity of the vessels, and all the characteristics of old age.

A most striking proof of this is afforded by islands; for we find that these, as well as peninsulas, have at all times been, and still are, the cradles of old age. In islands mankind always become older than in continents lying under the same degree of latitude. Thus men live longer in the islands of the Archipelago than in the neighbouring countries of Asia; in Cyprus, than in Syria; in Formosa and Japan, than in China; and in England and Denmark, than in Germany.

Salt water also is more favourable to longevity than fresh; and for that reason seafaring people can become so old. Stagnated fresh water, on the other hand, is hurtful, by its mephitic evaporation.

VIII. A great deal seems to depend likewise on the ground and soil, in a word, on the whole *genius loci*; and in this respect a cold soil appears to be the least calculated to promote longevity.

IX. According to experience, England, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, are the countries where men attain to the greatest age; and we find by accurate observation, that all the before-mentioned properties are in these united. On the other hand, Abyssinia, some parts of the West Indies, and Surinam, are countries where the life of man is shortest.

X. The more a man follows Nature, and is obedient to her laws, the longer he will live; the further he deviates from these, the shorter will be his existence. This is one of the most general of laws. In the same districts, therefore, as long as the inhabitants lead a temperate life, as shepherds or hunters, they will attain to old age; but as soon as they become civilized, and by these means sink into luxury, dissipation, and corruption, their duration of life will be shortened. It is, therefore, not the rich and great, not those who take gold tinctures and wonder-working medicines, who become old; but country labourers,

farmers, mariners, and such men as perhaps never in their lives employed their thoughts on the means which must be used to promote longevity. It is among these people only that the most astonishing instances of it are to be observed.

XI. The most dreadful degree of human mortality, occasioned by two inventions of modern times, is to be found among the slaves in the West Indies, and in hospitals for foundlings. Of the negro slaves, one in five or six dies annually; a proportion equal to that which takes place during the ravages of the most inveterate pestilence. And of 7000 children who are every year brought into the foundling hospital at Paris, 180 only are alive at the end of ten years; so that 6820 perish, and no more than one in forty escapes from that sepulchre. Is it not highly worthy of remark, and a new proof of our former position, that mortality prevails in the greatest degree where men deviate farthest from Nature; where her most sacred laws are despised; and where her first and strongest bonds are torn asunder? Where man, in the most evident manner, sinks below the brute, there the child is dragged from its mother's breast, and consigned helpless to the care of hirelings; there one brother is separated from another, from his home, from his native soil, and transferred to a strange and unhealthy climate, where, without hope, without comfort, and without enjoyment, while his heart continually sighs after those he left behind, he pines to death, oppressed with severity and labour. I am acquainted with no contagion, no plague, no state of mankind, either in ancient or modern times, during which mortality prevailed to the degree which it does in orphan-houses. To produce this evil required an excess of refinement reserved only for the most modern times. It required the aid of those wretched political calculators who can assert that the state is the best mother, and that nothing more is necessary to increase population than to declare children to be its property, to place them under its protection, and to establish a public abyss, which may

swallow them up. People now see, when it is too late, the horrid consequences of this unnatural maternity; this contempt of the first grand pillar of human society, *marriage* and *parental duty*. In so dreadful a manner does Nature avenge every transgression of her most sacred commands.

XII. The result of all experience, and a principal ground of longevity, is, *omnia mediocria ad vitam prolongandam sunt utilia*. Moderation in everything, the *aurea mediocritas*, so much extolled by Horace, and which Hume calls the best thing on earth, is indeed of the utmost efficacy in prolonging life. In a certain mediocrity of condition, climate, health, temperament, constitution, employment, spirits, diet, &c., lies the greatest secret for becoming old. By all extremes, either too much or too little, too high or too low, prolongation of life is impeded.

XIII. The following circumstance also is worthy of remark. All those people who have become very old, were married more than once, and generally at a very late period of life. There is not one instance of a bachelor having attained to a great age. This observation is as applicable to the female as to the male sex; and hence it would appear that a certain abundance in the power of generation is favourable to longevity. It forms an addition to the vital power; and this power of procreation seems to be in the most intimate proportion to that of regenerating and restoring one's self; but a certain regularity and moderation are requisite in the employment of it; and marriage is the only means by which these can be preserved.

The greatest example of this is a Frenchman, named De Longueville, who lived to the age of 110. He had been married to ten wives; his last wife he married when in his ninety-ninth year, and she bore him a son when he was in his hundred-and-first.

XIV. More women than men become old; but men only attain to the utmost extent of longevity. The equilibrium and pliability of the female body seem, for a certain

time, to give it more durability, and to render it less susceptible of injury from destructive influences. But male strength is, without doubt, necessary to arrive at a very great age. More women, therefore, become old; but fewer very old.

XV. In the first half of man's age, an active, even a fatiguing life, is conducive to longevity; but in the last half, a life that is peaceful and uniform. No instance can be found of an idler having attained to a remarkably great age.

XVI. Rich and nourishing food, and an immoderate use of flesh, do not prolong life. Instances of the greatest age are to be found among men who from their youth lived principally on vegetables, and who perhaps never tasted flesh.

XVII. A certain degree of cultivation is physically necessary for man, and promotes duration of life. The wild savage does not live so long as man in a state of civilization.

XVIII. To live in the country, and in small towns, is favourable to longevity: to live in great towns is unfavourable. In great cities, from one in twenty-five to one in thirty die every year; in the country, from one in forty to one in fifty.\* Mortality among children is in parti-

\* The data upon which Hufeland founded these statements were of a very inefficient character, as compared with those which we possess at the present day, in the labours of the Registrar-General. Thus, instead of the mortality of large cities ranging from 1 in 25 to 1 in 30, the highest known rate of mortality, namely that of Liverpool, is 1 in 30; while in the metropolis of London it is only 1 in 40. In the country, taking as examples, Kent, Surrey, and Northumberland, it ranges between 1 in 51, and 1 in 71½. In further illustration of this subject, I have selected the following examples from the Registrar-General's Report on the Mortality of England during the Seven Years 1838-44:—

	Males.		Females.
All England .....	1 in 44	...	1 in 47½
Liverpool.....	1 „ 28	...	1 „ 32
London .....	1 „ 37	...	1 „ 43
Kent .....	1 „ 48	...	1 „ 54
Surrey (rural).....	1 „ 54	...	1 „ 57

cular much increased by living in great cities, so that one half of those who are born die generally before the third year; whereas, in the country, the half are not carried off until the twentieth or thirtieth.\* The smallest degree of human mortality is one in sixty annually; and this proportion is found only here and there among country people.†

XIX. Among some men a kind of renovation seems to be really possible. In several instances of great age it has been remarked that persons in their sixtieth or seventieth year, when others cease to live, acquired new teeth and new hair, and commenced as it were a new period of life, which continued twenty or thirty years longer: a kind of self-reproduction which is to be observed only among the more imperfect part of the creation.‡

The most remarkable instance of this kind, with which I am acquainted, is an old magistrate named Bamberg,

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	Males.		Females.
Thanet and Easry .....	1 in 54	...	1 in 64
Hendon and Barnet .....	1 „ 61	...	1 „ 63
Bideford and Holsworthy .....	1 „ 61	...	1 „ 65
Godstone, Reigate, Dorking ...	1 „ 65	...	1 „ 62
Northumberland (3 districts)	1 „ 71	...	1 „ 72

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—EDITOR.

\* According to the Registrar-General's reports on the mortality of children, nearly one half of all that are born alive die before the end of the *fifth* year in Liverpool; while the same number in London live to the age of 33; and in the county of Surrey to 50. In 1845 nearly one half of all the children born in Birmingham died under *five* years of age; the entire half in Manchester died in the same period; and more than one half in Liverpool. In London the proportion was between one-half and one-third; and in Wales less than one-third.—EDITOR.

† In Northumberland, as is shown in the above table, it is 1 in 71½.—EDITOR.

‡ In my work on "Healthy Skin" I have mentioned several instances of very old persons in whom the natural colour of the hair returned after they had been for years before grey. This was the case with John Weeks, who lived to the age of 114. Sir John Sinclair reports a similar occurrence in an old Scotsman, who lived to be 110; and Susan Edmonds, when in her 95th year, recovered her black hair, but became again grey previously to her death at the age of 105.—EDITOR.

who lived at Rechingen in the Palatinate, and who died, in 1791, in the 120th year of his age. In 1787, long after he had lost all his teeth, eight new ones grew up. At the end of six months they again dropped out, but their place was supplied by other new ones, both in the upper and lower jaw; and Nature, unwearied, continued this labour four years, and even till within a month of his death. After he had employed his new teeth for some time with great convenience in chewing his food, they took their leave, and new ones immediately sprang up in some of the sockets. All these teeth he acquired and lost without any pain; and the whole number of them amounted at least to fifty.

By the observations already made, we are now enabled to come to a conclusion respecting the important question: What is the proper term or boundary of human life? One might believe that some degree of certainty could be acquired on this point; but it is incredible what difference in opinion respecting it prevails among philosophers. Some allow man a very long, and others a very short duration of life. Some are of opinion that, to determine it, nothing is necessary but to examine to what extent it is carried among savages, because in that state of Nature the utmost period of life must be discovered with the greatest precision. This, however, is false. It ought to be considered that this state of Nature is likewise, for the most part, a state of misery, where the want of society and civilization obliges men to waste themselves, and to undergo fatigue superior to their strength; and where, in consequence of their situation, they are exposed to more destructive influences, and enjoy much fewer means of restoration. We must not take our examples from the class of savages; for these, in their properties, participate with the inferior animals: but from that class where man, by culture and civilization, has really become a rational being; for he has then in a physical sense first attained to his destination and pre-eminence, and, by the help of reason, has procured those means of restoration from

without, and that happiness of situation, which it is possible for him to acquire. It is then only that we can consider him as a man, and collect examples from his condition.

One might also believe that death by marasmus, that is to say, by old age, is the true boundary of human life. But this reasoning, in the present times, is attended with great deception; for, as Lichtenberg says, men have found out the art to ingraft old age upon themselves before the time; and one may see very old people of thirty or forty, who have every symptom of extreme age, such as stiffness and aridity, weakness, grey hair, ossified cartilages, &c. which are observed very rarely but among persons who have attained to the age of eighty or ninety. This, however, is an artificial relative old age; and such a standard cannot be employed in a calculation which has for its object the duration of the life of man in general.

Some, therefore, have invented the most singular hypotheses to answer this question. The ancient Egyptians, for example, believe that the heart increased two drachms annually in weight for fifty years, and decreased again fifty years in the same proportion. In the hundredth year, according to this supposition, no more heart remained, and, consequently, the hundredth year was the term or boundary of human life. To answer this question in a satisfactory manner, one must, in my opinion, make the following essential distinction:

1. How long can man exist, in general, considered as a race; and what is the absolute duration of his life? We know that each class of animals has a certain absolute duration of life, and the case must be the same with man.

2. How long can man live as an individual; and what is the relative duration of his life?

With regard to the first question, the research respecting the absolute duration of human life, there is nothing to prevent us from giving it the utmost extent to which, according to experience, it is possible for it to attain. It.



is here sufficient to know what man's nature is capable of; and a man who has attained to the farthest boundary of mortal existence, may be considered as a pattern of human nature in its utmost perfection, and as an instance of what is possible for it under favourable circumstances. Now, experience incontestably tells us, that a man still may attain to the age of 150 or 160 years; and what is of the greatest importance is, that the instance of Thomas Parr, whose body was opened in his 152nd year, proves that, even at this age, the state of the internal organs may be so perfect and sound that one might certainly live some time longer; and that no doubt would have been the case with him, had not the manner in which he lived, by his not being accustomed to it, brought on a plethora which proved mortal. We may, therefore, with the greatest probability, assert, that the organization and vital power of man are able to support a duration and activity of 200 years.

This assertion acquires some weight by our finding that it agrees with the proportion between the time of growth and the duration of life. One may lay it down as a rule, that an animal lives eight times as long as it grows. Now, man in a natural state, where the period of maturity is not hastened by art, requires full twenty-five years to attain his complete growth and conformation; and this proportion also will give him an absolute age of 200 years.

It needs not be objected that great age is the unnatural state, or an exception from the rule; and that a shorter life is properly the natural condition. We shall see hereafter, that almost all these kinds of death which take place before the hundredth year are brought on artificially,—that is to say, by disease or accident; and it is certain that the far greater part of men die an unnatural death, and that not above one in a thousand attains to the age of a hundred years.

But with regard to the relative duration of human life: that, indeed, is extremely variable, and as different as each individual. It is regulated according to the goodness or badness of the mass of which the person is formed; his

manner of living; speedier or slower consumption; and a thousand internal and external circumstances which may have an influence on the continuance of his existence. We must not imagine that every man, at present, brings with him into the world a vital stock capable of lasting 150 or 200 years. It is unfortunately the fate of our generation, that the sins of the father often communicate to the embryo a far shorter *stamen vita*.\* Let us only reflect on the innumerable host of diseases and accidents which openly and secretly prey upon our lives, and we shall clearly see that it is now far more difficult than ever to attain to that term which human nature is really capable of reaching. That term, however, we must make our foundation; and we shall afterwards examine how far it may be in our power to remove those obstacles which prevent us at present from arriving at it.

The following table, founded on experience, may serve as a proof of the relative duration of human life at present.

Of a hundred men who are born,

50 die before the 10th year,

20 between 10 and 20

10 „ 20 „ 30

6 „ 30 „ 40

5 „ 40 „ 50

3 „ 50 „ 60

Therefore, 6 only live to be above the age of 60.

Haller, who collected the greatest number of instances respecting the age of man, found the relative duration of life to be in the following proportion:

Of men who lived from 100 to 110 years the instances

have been . . . . . 1000

110 to 120 . . . . . 60

120 „ 130 . . . . . 29

130 „ 140 . . . . . 15

140 „ 150 . . . . . 6

169 . . . . . 1

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\* Thread of life.—EDITOR.

## CHAPTER VII.

More particular examination of human life. Essential definition of it. Principal operations on which it depends. Accession from without. Assimilation and Animalization. Nutrition and preparation of the organized matter. Power and organs consumed by life itself. Separation and destruction of exhausted parts. Organs necessary for life. History of life. Causes of the long duration of the life of man. Influence of reason and the higher powers of thought. Answer to the question, Why, among men who are more fitted for long life than animals, mortality, however, should be greater?

We now come to our principal object, the application of the foregoing premises to the prolongation of human life. But before we can be able to accomplish this point, we must first thoroughly examine the following questions: In what does the life of man properly consist? On what organs, powers, and disposition of parts, does this important operation, and the duration of it, depend? In what does it essentially differ from the life of other creatures and beings?

Man, without doubt, is the highest link, the crown of the visible creation; the last, the most complete, and the best finished production of the plastic power of Nature; the highest degree of its self-representation, which our eyes are capable of seeing, or our senses of comprehending. With him our sublunary prospect is closed; he is the extreme point with which and in which the sensible world borders on a higher spiritual world. The organization of man is, as it were, a magic band, by which two worlds of a totally different nature are connected and conjoined; an eternally incomprehensible wonder, by which he becomes,

at the same time, an inhabitant of these two worlds, the material and the intellectual.

One may, with propriety, consider man as a compendium of Nature; as a masterpiece of conformation, in which all the active powers scattered throughout the rest of Nature, all kinds of organs and forms of life, are united in one whole, act in concert, and, by these means, make him, in the strictest sense, a little world; a copy and epitome of the greater, as he was so often called by the ancient philosophers.

His life is the most expanded; his organization the most delicate and best finished; his juices and component parts the most ennobled and best prepared; and his intensive life and self-consumption are, therefore, the strongest. He has, consequently, more points of contact with the whole of Nature by which he is surrounded, and likewise more wants; but he has, also, a richer and more perfect restoration than any other being. The inanimate, mechanical, and chemical powers of Nature; the organic or living powers; and that spark of divine power, the power of thought,—are here united and blended together, in the most wonderful manner, to form that godlike phenomenon which we call the life of man.

Let us now take a short view of the essence and mechanism of this operation, as far as they can be discovered.

The life of man, considered in a physical view, is nothing else than an incessant ceasing and being; a continual change of destruction and restoration; an everlasting contest of chemical, decomposing powers, with all the combining and creative vital powers. New component parts are every moment collected from the whole of Nature that surrounds us; called to life from an inanimate state, and transferred from the chemical to the organic living world; and from these heterogeneous particles the plastic vital power produces a new uniform mass, which, in every point, is stamped with the character of life. But, in the same unceasing manner, the exhausted, worn-out and cor-

rupted component parts, when their combination is dissolved, become subject again to the mechanical and chemical powers, which are in continual contest with the living powers; return from the organic to the chemical world; and again become a part of inanimate nature in general, from which they had been separated for a short time. This uninterrupted business is the work of the vital power ever active within us; and is, consequently, attended with an incessant exertion of that power, which is an important part of vital operation. Life, therefore, is a continual receiving, appropriation, and giving back; an incessant mixture of death and new creation.

What then, in a common sense, we call the life of a creature, considered as a representation, is nothing else than a mere phenomenon, which has nothing peculiar or self-subsistent but the active spiritual power which forms the ground of it, and which binds and regulates the whole. All the rest is only appearance; a grand spectacle continued, where the thing represented does not remain the same a moment, but is incessantly changing; where the whole duration, form and figure of the representation depend, in a particular manner, on the matter employed, which is always varying, and on the manner in which it is used; and the whole phenomenon can exist no longer than the continued influx from without, which supplies nourishment for the process. Its analogy with a flame is, therefore, very great; only that the latter is merely a chemical, and life a chemico-animal process, a chemico-animal flame.

The life of man then, according to its nature, depends on the following grand operations:

*I. Accession and reception of vital nourishment from without.*

By nourishment is here meant not merely what we call food and drink, but much rather that influx, from the atmosphere, of subtle, spiritual, vital nourishment, which seems in a particular manner to contribute towards the support of the vital power, especially as the former coarse nourishing substances serve more for supporting and repair-

ing the matter of the body and of its organs : in a word, not that alone which passes through the mouth and the stomach, since our lungs and skin receive an abundance of vital nourishment, and, for spiritual support, are of much greater importance than the stomach.

II. *Appropriation, assimilation, and animalization; transition from the chemical to the organic world, through the influence of the vital power.*

Everything that enters our bodies must first obtain the character of life before it can be called *ours*. All component parts, nay, the most subtle agents of Nature, which flow into us, must be animalized ; that is to say, be so modified and combined, in a totally new manner, by the help of the vital power, that they no longer act according to the laws of inanimate and chemical nature, but according to the peculiar laws of organic life, and support themselves in opposition to others. In short, as component parts of a living body, they cannot be considered singly, but always as compounded according to their proper nature and the laws of the vital power. Everything in us, even chemical and mechanical powers, is, therefore, animalized ; and this, for example, is the case with electricity, and oxygen or vital air. As soon as they are made component parts of a living body, they become compounded nature (animalized electricity, animalized oxygen), and cannot be considered merely according to the laws and influence which they had in common nature, but as subject to and acting under specific organic laws. These observations are applicable not only to oxygen, but also to other new chemical discoveries. But we must beware of ascribing to them the same effects in the vital combination of our bodies, as those which we perceive them to have in the atmosphere ; for they act according to different and specific laws. This observation, in my opinion, cannot be too often repeated ; and it alone may guard us from error in the highly important application of the principles of chemistry to organic life. We, without doubt, have these chemical powers and agencies within us, and a knowledge of them is indispen-

sably necessary; but their method of operating in our bodies is modified in another manner, as they find themselves in a world altogether different.

This important business of assimilation and animalization is the employment, first of the absorbing and glandular system, in its widest latitude; not merely of the lacteal vessels, but also of the absorbing vessels of the skin and the lungs, which may be called the vestibule, through which everything that is to form a part of us must pass; and, secondly, of the system of circulation, by which the component parts are prepared and brought to organic perfection.

III. *Nutrition; configuration of the animalized component parts; further ennobling of them.*

The component parts, fully animalized, are now incorporated and changed into organs; and this operation is the business of the plastic power. By the preparation of the finer and more perfect secreting vessels, these organized component parts are brought to their highest degree of purification and refinement; through the brain as nervous fluid, and through the organic system as organic juices, both of which are a combination of the purest organic matter, with a rich abundance of vital power.

IV. *Self-consumption of the organs and powers by vital exertion.*

Active life itself is an incessant exertion of agency and power; and, consequently, attended with a continual waste of power and consumption of the organs. Everything in which the power shows itself as an agent, and active, is exertion; for no vital exertion, not even the smallest, can be made without excitation and reaction of the power. This is a law of organic nature. The voluntary and insensible internal movements, therefore, of circulation, chyliification, assimilation, and secretion, as well as voluntary movements, and those produced by the operations of the mind, are continual exertions of power, and are incessantly consuming both the powers and the organs.

This part of life is of the utmost importance in regard

to its duration and condition. The stronger vital consumption is, the speedier life will be wasted, and the shorter must be its duration: but if it be too weak, the consequence then is too seldom a change of component parts, imperfect restoration, and a bad habit of body.

V. *Separation and new acquisition of component parts; transition of them from the organic to the chemical world, and their union again with inanimate nature in general.*

The component parts which have been used, and which can no longer be retained in this combination, again separate themselves from it. They lose the influence of the vital power, and begin to be decomposed, to fly off, and to be once more united according to the pure chemical laws of Nature. All our excretions, therefore, carry with them the most evident traces of decomposition, a process merely chemical, which, as such, is never possible in a state of real life. The function of discharging these parts from the body is committed to the organs of secretion and excretion, which operate with continual activity; the intestines, kidneys, liver, and, in particular, the whole surface of the skin and lungs. These perform real chemico-animal operations; the removal of the parts is effected by the vital power, but the productions are entirely chemical.

These grand operations constitute life in general, and at every moment; for they are continually united, continually present, and inseparable from the vital operation.

The organs which belong to life have in part been already mentioned. In the present point of view they may be most conveniently divided into three classes: *Those which receive and prepare; those which evacuate; and those which keep these contrary movements, as well as the whole internal economy, in equipoise and order.* Many thousands of greater or smaller organs are continually employed in separating and throwing off the particles which have been exhausted and corrupted by the internal consumption. Besides the evacuating ducts, properly so-called, the whole surface of the skin and lungs is covered with myriads of secreting organs in continual activity. Equally numerous



and various are the passages of the second class, those of *restoration*. It is not sufficient that the decrease of the coarser parts should be repaired from the nourishment by means of the organs of digestion; the lungs, the organs of respiration, are also continually employed to draw in, from the atmosphere, nourishment, vital heat, and vital power. The heart, and the circulation of the blood, which is dependent on it, serve to regulate their movements; to diffuse to all points the received heat and nourishment; and to drive off, through these passages of excretion, those particles which have been used and exhausted. All these operations are assisted by the influence of the mental powers and their organs, which are the most perfect in man. This, indeed, increases intensive life and self-consumption, but at the same time it is a highly important means of restoration, of which more imperfect beings are destitute.

One may form some idea of the extraordinary self-consumption of the human body, when one reflects that the pulsation of the heart, and the motion of the blood connected with it, take place 100,000 times every day; that is to say, the heart and all the arteries are contracted 100,000 times daily, with such force as is able to keep a resistance of from fifty to sixty pounds of blood in continual movement. What clock, what machine of the hardest iron, would not by such use be in a short time worn out? If we add to this the almost equally incessant muscular motion of our bodies, which must occasion a much greater wasting, as these parts consist more of tender gelatinous particles, we may then have a pretty just conception with what loss of substance a walk, for example of ten miles, or a rapid journey of thirty, must be attended. And not only soft and fluid parts, but even the hardest, are gradually worn out by continual use. This may be clearly perceived in the teeth, which are evidently destroyed by long use, and which, on the other hand, by being not used, that is, not exposed to antagonists, become exceedingly

long. It is proved that, in this manner, we should be very soon destroyed were there no reparation; and it has been estimated, with great probability, that every three months our bodies are no longer the same, but consist of entirely new particles.

But equally wonderful and extraordinary is the continual reparation of those parts which have been lost. This may be readily comprehended; because, notwithstanding the incessant loss which we sustain, our mass still continues the same. The fluid parts, however, regenerate themselves soonest; and experience has taught us, that the greatest loss of blood may be again repaired in fourteen days. The solid parts reproduce themselves by the same power and mechanism as are employed in their first creation; the gelatinous nourishing principle is conveyed by circulation to every part of the body, and is organized according to the plastic laws of the different parts. The bones even which are the hardest become regenerated, as is proved in the experiment with madder, by the use of which the bones in a short time become red. Whole bones lost or decayed can renew themselves also; and one finds sometimes with astonishment, in pieces of ivory, the hardest animal body, leaden bullets, which must have been lodged in them by a shot, and which are entirely surrounded with solid bone.\*

\* The fact is true, but the explanation removes the wonder. That a bullet should perforate solid ivory, and that the vacuity caused by its passage should close up and become firm and solid is, of course, impossible. The explanation of the phenomenon is as follows:—The tusk of the elephant continues to grow as long as the animal lives; for this purpose it is furnished with a permanent producing organ, or pulp, which occupies the root of the tusk. The pulp is conical in shape, and, as it is constantly engaged in forming successive layers of ivory, the tooth is gradually pushed forwards, in other words, it grows. Now, if a bullet enter the substance of this pulp it will, in time, by a common process of expulsion of foreign bodies, reach the surface of the pulp; and, when that is effected, the next layer of ivory formed by the pulp will be deposited between the pulp and the bullet; so that now the bullet is not only excluded from the pulp, but the pulp has covered it over with a

The usual progress or history of human life is, in a few words, as follows :—

The heart, the grand source of all vital motion as well as vital diffusion, and the grand principle of the excreting as well as renovating operations, becomes always smaller in proportion to the increase of age ; so that, at length, it occupies an eighth part of the space which it did in the beginning of life.\* Its substance also becomes always thicker and harder ; and its irritability becomes in the same proportion less. The active powers then decrease more and more every year ; and the retarding powers, on the other hand, increase. The same thing takes place in the whole vascular system, and the organs of motion. All the vessels become gradually harder, narrower, more shrivelled, and unfit for use ; the arteries are ossified and a great many of the finer vessels are entirely closed up.

The following, therefore, are the unavoidable consequences :—

1st. By this closing up and becoming shrivelled, the most important and finest organs of vital regeneration, the passages for assimilation and external accession, the lungs, skin, absorbing and lacteal vessels become deranged ; and, consequently, the addition of nourishing and enlivening component parts from without is rendered weaker. Nou-

layer of ivory, and as layer after layer of new ivory is formed, the bullet becomes more and more deeply buried, more and more removed from the pulp, and eventually may be found in the solid substance of the ivory several inches, or even feet, distant from its original bed.—EDITOR.

\* Hufeland must have meant “an eighth less space ;” he could hardly have intended to make a statement so perfectly erroneous as the above, upon a point so easily put to the proof. The heart, undoubtedly, diminishes a little in size in healthy old age ; becomes firmer in texture, and less frequent in its pulsations ; adapting itself in fact to the smaller volume of blood contained within the body ; but the amount of diminution is very trifling. In a preceding page (87), the author ridicules, very justly, the hypothesis of the ancient Egyptians concerning the decrease of the heart ; and in the examination of Thomas Parr, to which he also refers (p. 71), the heart, so far from being diminished in size, was found to be “great, thick, fibrous, and fat.”—EDITOR.

ishment can neither be received in such quantity, nor be prepared and diffused so well as before.

2nd. By this increasing hardness and aridity of the vessels they lose more and more their power of movement and sensation. Irritability and sensibility decrease always in the same proportion as the former increase; and the active and spontaneous powers within us always give more place to the destructive, mechanical, and chemical powers.

3rd. By the decrease of the motive power, and the closing up of innumerable vessels, excretion, the most indispensable cause of our continual purification, and of the removal of corrupt particles, principally suffers. The skin, its most important organ, becomes with years always closer, more impenetrable, and less useful. This is the case also with the kidneys, the pores of the intestines, and the lungs. The juices, therefore, in old age, must be always more impure, more acrid, tougher, and more impregnated with earthy particles. Earth, the great enemy of vital motion, acquires in our bodies, by these means, a preponderance; and thus, with a living body, we insensibly approach our final destination: "Return to the earth from which thou wast taken!"

In this manner does life bring on a cessation of life, that is, natural death; and its progress is as follows:—

The powers subject to the will first decrease, and then the spontaneous and proper vital movements. The heart can no longer force the blood to the extremities; pulsation and heat leave the feet and hands; but the blood is still kept in motion from the heart and larger vessels, and thus the vital flame, though weak, is for some time preserved. At length, the heart has not strength to press the blood through the lungs. Nature now employs all her power to invigorate respiration, and by these means to give some passage to the blood. This power, at last, is exhausted; the left ventricle of the heart, consequently, receives no more blood, and is no longer irritated, and continues at rest. The right still receives a little transmitted to it from parts already half dead; but these parts

soon become perfectly cold ; the juices curdle ; the heart receives heat no more, all its motion ceases, and death is complete.

Before I proceed further I must examine some problematical circumstances, which present themselves in the course of every research into the duration of human life, and which are deserving of particular attention.

The first problem is : *How is it possible that man, whose organization is the most delicate and most complex, whose self-consumption is the most rapid, and whose duration of life ought consequently to be the shortest, should, however, exceed so evidently, in duration of life, all classes of the more perfect animals, which have the same size, the same organization, and the same place in the scale of creation ?*

It is well known that the more imperfect the organization, the greater is the duration of life, or at least the vital tenacity. Man, as the most perfect of all creatures, ought consequently, in this respect, to be far inferior to others. Besides, it appears from the foregoing research, that the duration of life of an animal will be shorter the more numerous its wants are for supporting that life. Of these, man without doubt has the greatest number, and this is a new ground for a shorter duration. It has been likewise shown already that, among animals, the highest degree of self-consumption is the process of generation, and that it shortens in a very sensible manner their duration of life. In this the perfection of man is remarkably apparent ; and in him there is also a new kind of generation, the spiritual, or the business of thinking ; and his duration must thereby suffer still more.

It may be asked, then, by what means has man such a superiority in regard to the duration of life ?

In my opinion, the question may be answered from the following grounds :—

I. The texture of the whole cellular membrane is much softer and tenderer in man than in animals of the same class. Even the so-called nervous coat of an intestine is, in a dog, much harder, and cannot be so inflated as that of

a man. The veins also, the bones and the brain, are, in animals, much more solid, and abound with a greater quantity of earth. Now, I have before shown that too great a degree of hardness or brittleness in the organs is prejudicial to duration of life, because the organs thereby lose sooner their pliability and fitness for use; and because that stiffness and aridity which bring on old age, and at length a complete stoppage of the whole machinery, are thus hastened; man, consequently, must have old age later, and a more extensive period of life.

II. Man grows more slowly; attains later to maturity; all his powers are longer in expanding; and I have before shown, that the existence of a creature is lengthened in proportion to the time required for its expansion.

III. Sleep, the greatest means of vital retardation and support, is in man more peculiarly regular and constant.

IV. The perfect organization of the soul,\* the faculty of thinking,—that is, reason, makes in man a very great difference.

This higher and divine power, which exists in man alone, has the most visible influence, not only on his character in general, but also on the perfection and duration of his life; and in the following manner:—

1st. It is perfectly natural that the sum of the active vital powers within us should be increased by the assistance of this most pure and divine power.

2nd. Man, by the most refined and most perfect organization of the brain, acquires an entirely new organ of restoration peculiar to himself; or rather, his whole vital capacity is thereby increased.

\* I hope my readers will not here misunderstand my meaning, and imagine that I reckon the soul to be a part, a production, or property of the body. This is by no means the case. The soul, in my opinion, is something distinct from the body; a being of a totally different, more exalted, intellectual world; but in this sublunary combination, and to be a *human soul*, it must have organs to fit it not only for action, but also for sensation, and even for the higher functions of thinking and combining ideas. The first *cause of thought* is, therefore, spiritual; but the *business of thinking* itself, as carried on in this mortal machine, is organic.

3rd. By this highly perfect power of the soul, man enters into connexion with an entirely new world—the *spiritual*; which is concealed from the rest of the creation. It gives him points of contact altogether new—new influences, and a new element. Might not one in this respect call man an amphibious being (pardon the expression) of a higher kind, for he is a being who lives at the same time in two worlds, the material and the intellectual; and apply to him what I have shown from experience, respecting amphibious animals, that existence in two worlds at the same time prolongs life? What an immense ocean of spiritual nourishment and spiritual influences is opened to us by this higher and more perfect organization. An entirely new class of means to nourish and excite the vital power, peculiar to man alone, here presents itself. I mean the more refined mental and more exalted moral sensations and affections. I shall, on this occasion, mention only the enjoyment and comfort which lie in music; the art of painting, and the enchantments of poetry, and the imagination; the pleasure which attends the investigation of truth or a new discovery; the rich source of happiness that may be found in the idea of futurity; in the power of anticipating it, and of living, through hope, when the scenes now present shall be no more. What comfort, what unshaken firmness may we not acquire from the single idea and belief of immortality. In short, the circle of human life is hereby extended in an astonishing manner; and man actually derives his vital subsistence from two worlds at the same time, the material and the immaterial, the present and the future. His duration of life must, therefore, necessarily be a gainer.

4th. The more perfect powers of the soul contribute also so far to the support and prolongation of life, that man thereby is made a partaker of *reason*, which enables him to regulate his conduct in all things; which moderates instinct, a faculty merely animal, as well as the furious passions, and the rapid consumption connected with them;

and which, by these means, is able to preserve him in that middle state which we have already shown to be so necessary for long life.

In short, man evidently has more spiritual part than was requisite for him in the present world; and this superabundance of spiritual power carries with it, as it were, the bodily. It is the bodily only, which is subject to wasting, and to death.

I cannot here omit to remark, how apparently the moral object, the higher destination of man, is interwoven with his physical existence: and how *reason*, and the *higher powers of thought*, which properly render him a man, display not only his moral, but his physical perfection; consequently, a proper cultivation of his spiritual powers, particularly the moral, makes him, beyond all dispute, more perfect, not only morally, but also physically; and, as we shall have occasion to see hereafter, increases his vital capacity and vital duration. The man merely savage sinks, in regard to duration of life, to the level of the inferior animals, with which he is on an equality as to size and strength; while, on the other hand, the weakest man, by this spiritual subsistence, can often prolong his life far beyond that of the strongest animal.

From the same principles we can resolve also the second problem: *How comes it that among men, whose duration of life so far exceeds that of animals, and who, as experience shows, can live to an extraordinary age, so few attain to their real term of existence, and that the greater part of them die before the time; or, in other words, that where the longest duration is possible, there mortality is the greatest?*

The great softness and tenderness of the organs, which render man more capable of long duration, expose his life also to more dangers, to more interruptions, to more derangements, and to more injuries.

Besides, the more points of contact he has with the whole of surrounding Nature, he is rendered the more susceptible of a multitude of prejudicial influences which



a coarser organization does not feel. The gratification of his multiplied wants multiplies his dangers.

Even the spiritual life is attended with its peculiar poisons and dangers. What knows an animal of deluded hope, disappointed ambition, slighted love, care, repentance, or despair? And how destructive and pernicious to the life of man are these poisons of the mind!

Lastly, one main point is, that man, though organized for a reasonable being, is, however, *at liberty* to use his reason or not; animals, instead of reason, have *instinct*; and, at the same time, are far more insensible and callous in regard to destructive impressions. Instinct teaches them to use that which is good for them, and to shun that which hurts them. It tells them, when they have enough, when they require rest, when they are indisposed. Instinct, without the help of regimen, secures them from intemperance and dissipation. Among men, on the other hand, everything, even what concerns medicine, is referred to reason. Man has neither instinct to guard against error, nor resolution enough to withstand it. All this ought to be supplied by reason. If that be wanting, or if he neglect to listen to its admonition, he loses his only guide, his greatest means of support; and sinks, physically, not only to the level of the brute, but even below it, because brutes are indemnified by Nature for the want of reason in regard to their vital support. Man, on the contrary, without reason, is a prey to every noxious influence, and becomes the most perishable and corruptible being under the sun. The natural want of reason is far less prejudicial to the support and duration of life than the interrupted exercise of it, where it has been bestowed by Nature. But, as Haller, with so much truth, says,—

O wretched being, to thy interest blind,  
In whom the angel and the brute are join'd!  
God gave thee reason to direct thy choice;  
Yet thou thy ear turn'st from its friendly voice.

In this lies the principal cause why among men, who in

every respect are best fitted for long life, mortality is greatest.

One need not object that this assertion is contradicted by many madmen who live to a great age. The first thing to be considered here is the species of insanity. If it be attended with rage and fury, these certainly shorten life very much; because they are accompanied, in the highest degree, with exertion of the powers and vital consumption. And the case is the same with the deepest melancholy and distress of mind, as these injure the noblest organs, and destroy the powers. But in a mean state, where reason is not entirely gone, where the disorder displays itself by incoherent ideas, and false but often very agreeable sports of the imagination, there the physical use of reason may continue, while the moral is lost. Nay, a man in this state is to be considered as one under the influence of a pleasant dream, on whom a multitude of wants, cares, disagreeable and life-shortening impressions, and even physical causes of disease, as experience shows, produce no effect; who lives happy in his self-created world; and is far less exposed to destruction and vital consumption. It is to be observed, in the last place, that when a lunatic is totally deprived of reason, those by whom he is attended and taken care of, think for him, and as it were lend him their reason. He is therefore supported by reason, whether it be his own or that of another.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Signs of long life in individuals. Sound stomach and organs of digestion. Good teeth. Well-organized breast. Heart not too irritable. Strong natural power of restoration and healing. Sufficient quantity and diffusion of the vital power. Good temperament. Faultless and well-proportioned make of body. No particular weakness of any part. Portrait of a man destined to long life.

AFTER explaining these general principles, I can now proceed to lay down the special and individual grounds of long life, which must exist in the man himself. I shall here, therefore, describe those *grand properties*, and that *frame*, which, according to experience and the foregoing observations, must be possessed by every man before he can lay claim to a long existence. This sketch may, in some measure, serve as a register of the signs of longevity.

The properties, which may be called the foundations of long life in man, are the following:—

I. Above all things, the *stomach*, and the whole *system of digestion*, must be sound and well formed. It is incredible of what importance this most powerful of all the rulers in the animal kingdom is, in the above respect; and one may justly affirm, that, without a good stomach, it is impossible to attain to a great age.\*

The stomach, in two respects, is the foundation of long

\* In a good stomach we have the secret of Thomas Parr's great age; in the report of his examination after death, it is stated that "his viscera were sound and strong, especially his stomach; and it was observed of him that he used to eat often, both by night and by day, taking up with old cheese, milk, coarse bread, small beer, and whey; and what is most remarkable, he ate at midnight, a little before he died."—EDITOR.

life. First, as it is the principal and most important organ of the restoration of our nature; the door through which everything that is to form a part of us must enter; and the first vessel, on the good or bad condition of which, not only the quantity, but also the quality of the addition made to our bodies must depend. Secondly, because, by the state of the stomach, the effect even which the passions, the causes of disease, and other destructive influences, have over our bodies, is modified. "He has a good stomach," says the proverb, when one wishes to characterize a person to whom neither grief, care, nor sorrow, is prejudicial; and certainly in that expression there is a great deal of truth. All these passions must, in a particular manner, affect the stomach, and must be felt by it before they can pass into, or injure, our physical constitution. A strong robust stomach is not susceptible of any impression from them: on the other hand, a weak sensible stomach is every moment subject to some derangement in its whole frame; and, consequently, the important business of restoration is continually interrupted, and carried on in an imperfect manner. The case is the same with most of the physical causes of disease. The greater part of them make their first impression on the stomach: and, therefore, a want of digestion is the earliest symptom of illness. It is thus the first vessel by which they insinuate themselves into our bodies, and disturb the whole economy. Besides, it is a principal organ, on which the equilibrium of the nervous motions, and in particular their tendency to the periphery, depends. If it be powerful and active, morbid irritations cannot so easily fix themselves: they are removed and driven off through the skin, before they effect a real derangement of the whole system; that is to say, before they bring on disease.

A *good stomach* may be known two ways; not merely by an excellent appetite, for that may be the consequence of any stimulus; but, in particular, by an easy and perfect digestion. Whoever feels that he has a stomach, cannot have a good one. One must not be sensible that

one has eaten; must not be drowsy, dejected, or uneasy after meals; must have no phlegm in the throat in the morning; and the evacuations must be regular and well concocted.

We are taught, by experience, that all those who attained to a very great age had a good appetite, which they retained to the last.

For good digestion, *good teeth* are extremely necessary; and one, therefore, may consider them among the essential properties requisite for long life, and in two points of view. First, good and strong teeth are always a sign of a sound, strong constitution, and good juices. Those who lose their teeth early, have, in a certain measure, taken possession of the other world with a part of their bodies. Secondly, the teeth are a great help to digestion, and consequently to restoration.

II. *A well-organized breast and organs of respiration.* These may be known by a broad, full chest; the power of keeping in one's breath for a long time; a strong voice, and by being seldom subject to a cough. Breathing is one of the most incessant and necessary of the vital operations; the means of the most indispensable, spiritual restoration; and, at the same time, the cause by which the blood is continually freed from a multitude of corrupted particles. Those in whom these organs are well formed, possess the greatest assurance of longevity; and for this reason, because an important passage, by which death and the causes of destruction might insinuate themselves, is fully secured. The breast is among the principal *atria mortis*,\* one of those parts of which death first lays hold.

III. *A heart not too irritable.* We have already seen, that a principal cause of our internal consumption, or spontaneous wasting, lies in the continual circulation of the blood. He who has a hundred pulsations in a minute, must be wasted far more speedily than he who has only fifty. Those, therefore, whose pulse is always quick, and

\* Entrance halls of death.—EDITOR.

in whom every trifling agitation of the mind, or every additional drop of wine, increases the motion of the heart, are unfortunate candidates for longevity, since their whole life is a continual fever; and the prolongation of it is thereby counteracted in a double manner, partly by the speedier wasting connected with it, and partly because restoration is impeded by nothing so much as by an incessantly accelerated circulation. A certain degree of rest is absolutely necessary, that the nourishing particles may settle, and be converted into the substance of our bodies. Such people, also, will never become corpulent.

*A slow, uniform pulse* is, therefore, a strong sign of long life, and a great means to promote it.

IV. *A sufficient quantity and diffusion of the vital power.*  
*A good temperament.* Calmness, order, and harmony in all the internal operations and movements, are of the utmost importance for supporting and prolonging life; but these, in a particular manner, depend on a proper state of the general irritability and sensibility of the body; and the latter qualities must be neither too strong nor too weak, and be uniformly diffused, so that no part may have too great or too small a proportion. A certain degree of insensibility, a small mixture of phlegm, are also ingredients highly necessary for prolonging the duration of life; as they lessen, at the same time, self-consumption, favour a far more perfect restoration, and contribute most effectually to preserve our existence. A good *temperament*, therefore, may so far be the foundation of a long life. The best is the *sanguine, tempered with a little of the phlegmatic*. This produces a serene, cheerful mind, moderate passions, undaunted courage, and, in short, that state of soul which is most fitted for longevity. The cause of this disposition is generally an abundance of the vital power. And as Kant has already proved that such a mixture of temperament is the properest for attaining to moral perfection, I am of opinion that one may reckon it among the best gifts of heaven.

V. *A strong natural power of restoration and healing*

by which all those losses which we daily sustain are not only repaired, but repaired well. This depends, according to the above principles, on a good digestion, and a calm, uniform circulation of the blood. To these may be also added, a perfect and vigorous activity of the absorbing vessels (the lymphatic system), and the good condition and regular operation of the organs of secretion. The effect of the former is, that the nourishing substances pass easily into our bodies, and are enabled to reach the places of their destination; by the latter, they are completely freed from all extraneous and pernicious mixture, and enter us perfectly pure. And this properly gives an idea of the most complete restoration.

It is incredible how much this quality contributes to the support of life. In a man who possesses it, consumption may be exceedingly strong without his sustaining much loss, as it is again repaired with the utmost speed. We have, therefore, instances of men who, even amidst a life of debauchery and fatigue, became very old: and thus, for example, could a Duke de Richelieu and a Louis XV. attain to a great age.

*A strong natural power of healing* must also be united with that of restoration; or, in other words, that faculty of Nature by which it assists itself easily in cases of derangement and interruption, keeps back and removes the causes of disease, and favours the healing of wounds. There is an astonishing power of this kind in our bodies, as is shown by the example of savages, who are scarcely subject to any diseases, and among whom the most dreadful wounds heal up entirely of themselves.

VI. *An uniform and faultless conformation of the whole body.* Without uniformity of structure there can be no uniformity of powers and motion, and without these it is impossible to become old. Besides, an imperfect structure gives an easy opportunity for the rise of local diseases, which may bring on death. One will not, therefore, find that an overgrown person ever attained to a very great age.

VII. No part, no intestine must have a great degree of weakness, otherwise such a part may serve to give a ready admission to the causes of disease, to the first seeds of some disorder or derangement, and become, as it were, the *atrium mortis*. Even where the organization is very good and perfect, this may be a secret enemy, from which destruction may be afterwards conveyed to the whole body.

VIII. The *texture of the organization* must be of a mean quality; strong and durable, but not too dry or rigid. We have already seen, that, through all the classes of organized beings, too great aridity or hardness is prejudicial to the duration of life. Among men it must be so in the highest degree; because their organization, according to their destination, is the tenderest of all, and, by a superfluity of earthy particles, may be soonest rendered useless. These are injurious two ways, partly by bringing on much sooner old age, the grand enemy of life; and partly by making the finest organs of restoration much sooner unfit for discharging their functions. Hardness of organization, in order to favour long life, must not consist so much in mechanical toughness as in hardness of sensation; and must not be the property so much of a coarser texture as of the powers. The quantity of earth must be exactly so great as to give sufficient elasticity and tone; but neither so large as to prove inflexibility, nor so small as to occasion too much facility of movement; for both these are hurtful to duration of life.

Let me now be permitted to delineate the portrait of a man destined to long life. He has a proper and well-proportioned stature, without, however, being too tall. He is rather of the middle size, and somewhat thick-set. His complexion is not too florid: at any rate, too much rudeness in youth is seldom a sign of longevity. His hair approaches rather to the fair than the black; his skin is strong, but not rough. His head is not too big; he has large veins at the extremities, and his shoulders are rather round than flat. His neck is not too long; his abdomen does not project; and his hands are large, but not too



deeply cleft. His foot is rather thick than long; and his legs are firm and round. He has also a broad arched chest; a strong voice, and the faculty of retaining his breath for a long time without difficulty. In general, there is a complete harmony in all his parts. His senses are good, but not too delicate; his pulse is slow and regular.

His stomach is excellent, his appetite good, and his digestion easy. The joys of the table are to him of importance; they tune his mind to serenity, and his soul partakes in the pleasure which they communicate. He does not eat merely for the sake of eating; but each meal is an hour of daily festivity; a kind of delight attended with this advantage, in regard to others, that it does not make him poorer, but richer. He eats slowly, and has not too much thirst. Too great thirst is always a sign of rapid self-consumption.

In general, he is serene, loquacious, active, susceptible of joy, love, and hope; but insensible to the impressions of hatred, anger, and avarice. His passions never become too violent or destructive. If he ever gives way to anger, he experiences rather an useful glow of warmth, an artificial and gentle fever without an overflowing of the bile. He is fond also of employment, particularly calm meditation and agreeable speculations, is an optimist, a friend to nature and domestic felicity, has no thirst after honours or riches, and banishes all thoughts of to-morrow.

## CHAPTER IX.

Examinations of various new methods for prolonging life. By vital elixirs. Gold tinctures and wonder-working essences. By hardening the organs. By rest and suspending for a time vital activity. By guarding against consumption, and the external causes of disease. By fast living. Account of the only methods possible by which life can be prolonged. Proper union of the four principal indications. Increasing the vital power. Strengthening the organs. Moderating vital consumption. Favouring restoration. Modification of these methods, according to difference of constitution, temperament, age, and climate.

VARIOUS are the methods and plans which have been proposed for the prolongation of life. The old superstitious, astrological, and fantastic methods we have already examined and appreciated; but there are others, more modern, which appear to be founded on juster principles of life and vital duration, and which still deserve some inquiry before we proceed to establish that which alone is possible.

I think I have sufficiently proved, that the prolongation of life is possible, four different ways :

- 1st. *By increasing the vital power itself.*
- 2nd. *By hardening the organs.*
- 3rd. *By retarding vital consumption.*
- 4th. *By facilitating and assisting restoration.*

On each of these ideas have been founded plans and methods, which in part are very plausible, and which have been much commended; but they are all deficient, chiefly in this, that they regard only one object, and neglect the rest.

Let us, therefore, examine and appreciate some of the principal.

On the first idea, that of *increasing the quantity of the vital power*, has been, in particular, founded, the method of those who prepare and who use gold-tinctures, astralish salts, the philosopher's stone, and elixirs of life. Electricity even, and animal magnetism, belong in part to this class. All the Adepts, Rosicrucians, and Consorts, and a multitude of people sensible in other respects, are fully convinced that their first matter can not only convert the rest of the metals into gold, but continually supply the lamp of life with new oil. A man, therefore, needs only take daily a small quantity of such tinctures to recruit the vital power; and thus, according to their theory, we can never be exposed to a want or a total loss of it. On this is founded the history of the celebrated *Gualdus*, who by these helps lived 300 years, and, as some firmly believe, is alive still.

Those, however, who place confidence in these helps are miserably deceived. The use of such medicines, which are all hot and stimulating, increases naturally vital sensation; and such people consider increase of vital sensation as a real increase of the vital power, without reflecting that a continual increase of the former is, by irritation, the surest means of shortening life, and in the following manner:—

1st. These, in part, spirituous medicines act as strong stimulants, increase the internal motion and intensive life, consequently the self-consumption, and occasion a more rapid wasting of the organs. Such is the case not only with the coarser, but also with the more refined, substances of this kind. Even electricity, magnetism, and the inspiring dephlogisticated air (oxygen gas), which one certainly might believe to be the gentlest method of instilling vital power, increase self-consumption in a high degree. This may be very clearly perceived in asthmatics, who are made to inspire such air. Their vital sensation is thereby much exalted, but they die sooner.

2nd. These stimulating medicines, as they exalt vital sensation and also sensibility, expose one more to exertion of the powers; to enjoyment, and to sensual gratifications,

which some, however, particularly recommend; and by these means increase self-consumption.

3rd. They contract and desiccate, consequently make the finer organs much sooner unfit for use, and bring on premature old age, which they ought rather to keep off.

And even supposing that our vital sensation required to be so much exalted, neither alembics nor crucibles are necessary for that purpose. Nature herself has provided for us that most excellent spirit, *wine*, which excels all those prepared by the art of man. If there be anything in the world which one can call the *prima materia*, that contains the spirit of the earth in an incorporated form, it is certainly this noble production; and yet we find that too liberal a use of it occasions a speedier consumption, brings on old age, and evidently shortens the duration of life.

But it is, indeed, foolish to endeavour to accumulate the vital power in a concentrated form within the body, and then to imagine that one has accomplished something great. Are opportunities of doing this, wanting? It abounds in everything near and around us. All the nourishment we take, each mouthful of air that we breathe, is filled with it. The principal point is to preserve our organs in a state capable of absorbing, receiving, and appropriating it. Let a lifeless body be filled ever so much with vital drops, it will not begin to revive, because it has no longer organs to appropriate them. It is not the want of vital accession, but of vital capacity, which in the end makes men unfit to live longer. But here Nature herself is our guardian; and, in this respect, all vital drops are unnecessary.

On the second idea, *strengthening the organs*, a very favourite system, that of *hardening*, has also been founded. It is therefore believed that the more the organs are hardened, the longer they must naturally withstand consumption and destruction.

But we have already seen what a great difference there is between the mechanism of a thing and its vital dura-

tion; and that a certain degree only of solidity is favourable to the latter, and that too much is highly prejudicial. The essential character of life consists in the uninterrupted and free activity of all the organs, and of the circulation of the juices; and what can be more destructive to these, and consequently to the duration of life, than too great hardness and rigidity? Fish certainly have the softest and most watery flesh; yet they far exceed, in vital duration, stronger and more solid animals.

The favourite method of hardening, which consists in endeavouring, by the continued use of the cold bath; keeping the body exposed, almost naked, to the keenest air, and the most fatiguing exercise, to make one's self strong and indestructible, produces no other effect than that our organs become drier, tougher and more rigid, consequently much sooner unfit for use; and therefore, instead of prolonging life, we bring on premature old age and speedier dissolution.

There is, however, some truth, upon the whole, in this method; and it has proved unsuccessful, because people united with it false ideas, and carried it too far. It is not so much a hardening of the vessels as of the feeling, that can contribute to the prolongation of life. When one, therefore, employs the hardening method so far as to make the vessels strong, but not hard or stiff, so that their too great irritability, a principal cause of speedy wasting, is blunted or removed, and the body rendered thereby, at the same time, less susceptible of destructive influences, it may certainly, in that case, be of some service in lengthening our existence.

The third idea, that of *retarding vital consumption*, is highly captivating; and has been adopted, in particular, with great satisfaction, but very improperly employed, by those who are naturally much inclined to indolence and ease. To waste the body by labour and exertion is, to such people, unpleasant in itself; they are rejoiced, therefore, to find it not only disagreeable, but also prejudicial, and to have, in *indolence*, a grand secret for prolonging

life, superior to all the arcana of *Cagliostro* and *St. Germain*.

Some have gone even still farther, and in particular *Maupertuis*, who conceived it might be possible, by a complete suspension of vital activity, or an artificial apparent death, to check self-consumption entirely, and by such pauses, to preserve life for perhaps several centuries. He supported his proposition on the life of a chicken in the egg, and of insects in their state of nymph and chrysalis, which, by the help of cold and other means, whereby the animal is kept longer in its deathlike sleep, can actually be prolonged. According then to these principles, nothing is necessary but to acquire the art of half-killing one. The same idea occurred even to the great Franklin. While in France, he received from America a quantity of Madeira wine, which had been bottled in Virginia. In some of the bottles he found a few dead flies, which he exposed to the warm sun, in the month of July; and in less than three hours these apparently dead animals recovered life, which had been so long suspended. At first they appeared as if convulsed; they then raised themselves on their legs, washed their eyes with their fore feet, dressed their wings with those behind, and began in a little time to fly about. This acute philosopher proposed, therefore, the following question:—"Since, by such a complete suspension of all internal as well as external consumption, it is possible to produce a pause of life, and at the same time to preserve the vital principle, might not such a process be employed in regard to man? And if that be the case," adds he, like a true patriot, "I can imagine no greater pleasure than to cause myself to be immersed along with a few good friends in Madeira wine, and to be again called to life at the end of fifty or more years, by the genial solar rays of my native country, only that I may see what improvement the state has made, and what changes time has brought along with it."

This proposal, however, vanishes again into nothing

when we consider the real essence and object of human life. What is meant by the life of man? Not, indeed, mere eating, drinking, and sleeping, else it would agree perfectly with the life of a swine, to which *Cicero* could give no other name than a preventive of corruption. The life of man has a higher destination—action, business, and enjoyment. It is not enough that it be present, it must expand, and bring to perfection those divine seeds which exist within him; it must give happiness to himself and to others. Man must not merely fill up a gap in the creation, he must be the lord, the ruler, and the benefactor of it. Can one say of a man that *he lives*, when he spins out life amidst sleep, indolence, or apparent death? But, what is still more, we find here also a new proof in how inseparable a manner the moral object is interwoven with his physical appointment and destination, and how promoting the one conduces to improve the other. Such an unmanly life, as it may be properly called, would contribute directly not to prolong, but to shorten human existence, and in two ways:—

1st. Human life is composed of so tender and delicate organs that they very readily become unfit for use by rest and inactivity. It is only action and exercise which make them useful and durable. Rest and want of exercise are their most deadly poison.

2nd. We have already seen that not merely lessening consumption, but promoting restoration also, in a sufficient degree, is necessary for the prolongation of life. But two operations are here requisite: first, perfect assimilation of what is useful; and secondly, excretion of what is hurtful. The latter can never take place without proper activity and motion. What would be the consequence of a prolongation of life by means of rest and indolence? The body would be consumed very little or not at all, and yet restoration would be carried on. A most destructive plethora must thence arise, because the body always receives and never throws off. And, what is still worse, universal corruption, with its train of evils, acrid humours,

disease, &c., must gain the upperhand, as the secretion of what is prejudicial has been stopped. It is very natural, therefore, to suppose that such a body would be much sooner destroyed, as experience teaches us.

3rd. With regard to the prolongation of life by a suspension of the vital activity during a temporal state of apparent death, I shall, in the last place, observe, that this idea has been founded on the example of insects, tortoises, and other animals, which, as we have before seen, can, by such a deathlike sleep, be preserved a hundred years and more, and consequently far beyond the natural term of their existence.

But, in making such proposals, people do not reflect that all those experiments were tried upon very imperfect animals, among which the transition from their natural half-animated state to actual torpor is much less abrupt than it would be among men, who possess the highest degree of vital perfection. And one, in particular, must here observe the important difference made by the business of respiration. All these animals have naturally less need of breathing; and warmth is less necessary to them in order to retain life. Man, on the other hand, requires, for the preservation of his life, a continual accession of heat and spiritual powers; in short, of the *pabulum vite*,\* which exists in the atmosphere. Such a total suspension of breathing would, by an entire loss of internal heat, soon become mortal. The more perfect agency of the soul is so interwoven with the organization of man, that its influence could not be stopped so long without causing the death and destruction of the more delicate organs which belong to it.

Others have attempted to prolong life by endeavouring to avoid or remove the causes of disease, such as heat and cold, certain kinds of food and drink, &c. But this method is attended with one disadvantage, which is, that we are not able to guard against all these evils; and that we are, therefore, rendered much more sensible of those which

\* Food of life.—EDITOR.



affect us. The preventing of consumption externally may also be here included. In warm countries, where the heat of the atmosphere keeps the skin always open, and makes the evaporation of the component parts of our bodies far more constant, people find some benefit from rubbing the skin continually with ointments and oil, which stop up the pores, and prevent the more watery and volatile particles from flying off in perspiration. By this process one experiences a real sensation of strengthening; and, in such climates, it appears to be necessary to check too speedy consumption by profuse evaporation. But it is certain that it is in warm climates only that it can be employed. In our climate, where the atmosphere itself acts as a medium to shut up the pores of the skin, we have more need of promoting perspiration than of preventing it.

I must now say a few words respecting an entirely new experiment for prolonging vital existence, which consists merely in *increasing intensive life*. On this principle the duration of life is determined, not by number of days, but by the sum of its use or enjoyment; and it is believed that if one, within a certain period, has had twice as much action and enjoyment as another, he has lived as much as the other in double the time. However much I respect this method in itself, if it consist in laudable exertion, and be the consequence of a mind fertile in action; and though I am fully convinced that, considering the uncertainty of our life, it presents an idea highly captivating; I must confess, that it will never obtain its object, and that the principle of it appears to be altogether false. As this opinion has found so many advocates, I hope I shall be permitted to analyze it a little more accurately, and to explain the grounds of my assertion.

All the operations of nature require not only energy or intensive life, but also extension or time. Let fruit receive twice as much heat and nourishment as it has in its natural state, and in half the time it will attain to apparent ripeness; but certainly not to that degree of perfection which

the same fruit acquires in its natural state, with half the intensive activity, in double the time.

The case is the same with the life of man. We must consider it as a whole compounded of various effects; as a grand ripening process, the object of which is to give the utmost expansion and perfection possible to human nature, and to make it fill up that point which it holds in the creation. Now ripening and maturity are the produce only of time and experience; and it is, therefore, impossible that a man who has lived thirty years, though in that time his action and labour may have been doubled, should have attained to the same perfection and maturity that are acquired in a period of sixty years. Besides, he was perhaps destined to be useful in the course of his life to two or three generations; but his prematurity hurries him off before he has seen the end of the first. He accomplishes, then, neither in regard to himself nor to others, the object and destination of complete life; interrupts the course of his days; and remains a more refined suicide.

In a still worse point of view appear those who endeavour to prolong life by concentrating its enjoyments. By these means they may be wasted much sooner; and what is worst of all, they are often punished for their folly, because they must lead a life merely intensive without any extension; that is, they must become a burden to themselves and to others, or rather they exist longer than they live.

The true art of prolonging human life consists in uniting properly, and employing, the before-mentioned four principles, or *indications*, as they are termed by physicians; but in such a manner that none of them be sacrificed to the rest, and that one never forget that the question is concerning the life of man, which, to deserve that name, must consist not merely in existing, but in business and enjoyment, and in fulfilling the end of his destination. I shall here take a short view of the whole method.

I. *The sum or fund of the vital power must be suffi-*

*ciently supplied and nourished*; yet never to such a degree as to occasion too violent exertion of it, but only so far as may be necessary for it to perform the external and internal functions with proper ease, strength, and duration, and to give the component parts and juices that organic character which is requisite for their destination, and for guarding against chemical corruption. This may be done with the greatest certainty,—

1st. By sound and powerful generation.

2nd. By pure and wholesome vital nourishment or accession from without; also pure atmospheric air; and good, fresh, well-digested food and drink.

3rd. By a sound and useful state of those organs by which everything added to us from without must be assimilated before it can do us good. These essential organs are the *lungs, stomach, and skin*; on the preserving of which in a sound state, vital nourishment depends in a very particular manner.

4th. By an uniform diffusion of the power throughout the whole body. Every part, every intestine, every point of our bodies, must obtain such a quantity of the vital power as may be necessary to enable it to discharge its functions properly. Does any part acquire too little, a weakness of it is the consequence; if it acquire too much, the consequences are too violent motion, irritation, accumulations of it; and then that harmony, the grand pillar of sound life, is, at any rate, always destroyed. This uniform distribution of the power may be promoted, in particular, by the uniform use and exercise of each part and each organ of the body; by bodily motion; proper gymnastic exercises; the tepid bath, and friction.

II. *A sufficient degree of solidity or hardness must be given to the organs or corporeal matter*; but not such as to render them actually stiff and rigid, which, instead of being beneficial to the body, would be hurtful to it.

The hardness to which I here allude is of two kinds: increased binding and cohesion of the component parts, as well as physical solidity of the vessels; and next, hard-

ening the sensation against noxious and morbid impressions.

Sufficient solidity or cohesion of the vessels, which physicians call *tone*, acts in the following manner, in regard to the prolongation of life :—

First, as the cohesion of our component parts is thereby increased, they cannot be so speedily wasted, destroyed, and separated by the vital process; consequently the change of the component parts is not so rapid: it is not necessary that they should be so often renewed; and the whole intensive life is more slow, which is always an advantage in regard to its extension and duration.—For the better illustration of this subject, I shall here only compare the life of a child with that of a man. In the former, the power of cohesion, the solidity of the vessels are much less; the connexion of the component parts is weaker and more lax, it wastes away therefore much speedier; the change of its component parts is more rapid; it must eat more, and much oftener; it must sleep longer, and more frequently, to renew what has been lost; and the blood must circulate with far greater velocity; in a word, its intensive life and self-consumption are much stronger than in a man who has vessels more solid.

Secondly, as the organs are thereby, in reality, first strengthened. The vital power alone supplies no strength. To produce what we call *strength* of the organs, and also of the whole system, a sufficient degree of the simple power of cohesion must be combined with the vital power.—This likewise will appear in the clearest manner, from the comparison of a child with a man. A child is far more abundant in vital power, irritability, tendency to growth, and the power of reproduction, than a man; yet this body, so rich in life, has less *strength* than that of a man, merely because the cohesion of the vessels in the child is weaker and more loose.

Lastly, because the too great morbidic or irregular irritability, sensibility, and general delicacy of the vessels, are regulated, moderated, kept within proper bounds, and

but the stomach and system of digestion are injured, and consequently the most important means of restoration are weakened.

3rd. Too abundant and too strong irritation and gratification of the animal passions. These tend as much to hasten vital consumption, as straining the powers of thought.

4th. Too violent and too long continued muscular motion. Very great excess, however, is necessary before this can be hurtful.

5th. All strong or long continued excretions, such as perspiration, diarrhoea, catarrh, cough, loss of blood, &c. These exhaust not only the power but also the matter, and tend to corrupt the quality of the latter.

6th. All too violent or too long continued causes of irritation acting upon us, by which the power is always exhausted. The more irritable a life is, the quicker it will pass away. To these belong too strong or too incessant irritation of the organs of the mind and sensation; passions, excess in wine, brandy, spices, and seasoning of food. Frequent overloading the stomach may be included in the same class; especially as it for the most part renders necessary the use of evacuants and purgatives, which, as they weaken, are also prejudicial.

7th. Diseases with highly increased irritation, particularly such as are feverish.

8th. Heat, when it acts upon us too incessantly and with too much strength. Keeping the body too warm, therefore, from infancy, is one of the greatest means to hasten consumption, and to shorten the duration of life.

9th. In the last place, too great a degree of irritability and sensibility in the vessels deserves also to be inserted in this rubric. The greater these are, the easier can any stimulus, even the smallest, excite violent irritation, exertion of power, and consequently occasion a waste of that power. A man with this faulty constitution is sensible of a great many impressions which have no effect on common men, and is doubly affected even by the most usual

accidents of life. His intensive life, of course, is infinitely stronger ; but his vital consumption must be greatly accelerated. Everything, therefore, which can increase irritability, either moral or physical, may be reckoned to belong to those means which hasten consumption.

IV. *Restoration of the lost powers and matter must be effected easily and completely.* For this purpose the following things are necessary :—

1st. Soundness, vigour, and activity of those organs by which the restorative particles must pass into our bodies. This process is, in part, continual and permanent, as through the lungs ; and partly periodical, as through the stomach. To these organs belong the lungs, the skin, the stomach, and the intestines. That restoration may be performed well, these parts must be thoroughly sound, fit for use, and active. They are consequently of the utmost importance in prolonging life.

2nd. Soundness, activity, and vigour of the innumerable vessels, by which the component parts received into our bodies must be assimilated, rendered homogeneous, be brought to perfection, and ennobled. This is first, and in a particular manner the function of the absorbing or lacteal system, with its multitude of glands ; and secondly, of circulation, or the system of the blood, by which organic ennobling is completed. I consider the absorbing system, therefore, as one of the grand means of restoration. In this respect we must, above all things, direct our attention to infancy ; for the first nourishment in the tenderest state of childhood, the treatment, during the first year of life, determine, for the most part, the condition of this system, as it too often happens that it is destroyed in the beginning, by weak, corrupted, viscid nourishment, and impurities ; and an essential foundation is thus laid for a short life.

3rd. A sound state of the nourishment and matter from which we are restored. Our food and drink must be pure, that is, free from corrupted particles ; abundant in nutritive principles ; stimulating in a certain degree, for that quality is necessary to promote proper digestion and

the whole vital operation, but combined, at the same time, with a sufficient quantity of water or of fluids. The last is an important circumstance, but often neglected. Water, if it be not nourishment of itself, (though this, by the instance of fishes, worms, &c., who may be fed for a long time with water alone, seems highly probable,) is at any rate indispensably necessary for the business of restoration and nourishment; first, because it must be the vehicle for the proper nutritive substances, in order that they may be sufficiently diffused from the intestines to every point of the body; and secondly, because this vehicle is absolutely necessary to produce sufficient secretion and evacuation of what is corrupted, and consequently for the purification of the body.

4th. A healthful and proper state of the atmosphere in which and on which we live. The air is our peculiar element; and, in two points of view, an important medium of restoration. First, because it communicates to us two of the most spiritual and most necessary component parts of life, oxygen and heat; and secondly, because it is the most important vehicle for attracting from us and absorbing our component particles which have become corrupted. It is the principal medium for this continual exchange of the finer component parts. The far most considerable and important of our excretions are gaseous; that is to say, the matter must be converted into vapour in order to be expelled. To these belong all excretions of the superficies of our bodies, the skin, and the lungs. This evaporation depends not merely on the power and activity of the vessels of respiration, but on the quality of the air which they draw in. The more it is already loaded with component parts, the less new substance can it receive; and, therefore, moist air checks perspiration. From these principles we may deduce the following conclusions:—The atmosphere in which we live must contain a sufficient quantity of vital air, but not too much, else it might stimulate too violently and hasten vital consumption. It must likewise contain as few foreign component parts dis-

solved in it as possible: it must also be neither moist, nor rendered impure by earthy, vegetable, or animal particles:\* its temperature must be neither too warm nor too cold; for, in the former case, it exhausts and weakens the power. in the latter makes the vessels too stiff and rigid: and it must neither in its temperature, mixture, nor pressure, be subject to too rapid changes; for it is a law, fully confirmed by experience, that uniformity in the atmosphere and climate is uncommonly favourable to long life.

5th. A free passage and active organs to promote secretion and evacuation of the corrupted component particles. Our life consists of a continual change of component parts. Were not those which have been exhausted and rendered useless continually separated and expelled, it would be impossible that we could appropriate new ones in sufficient quantity; and, what is still worse, the new addition, by being mixed with those particles kept back, would itself acquire the character of corruption. Hence, the so-called acidity, viscosity, impurity, and putrefaction of the juices, or rather of the whole matter of the body. Restoration, therefore, is by bad secretion prevented two ways; partly in the quantity, and partly in the quality. The organs on which this secretion and purifying of the body principally depend are the *skin, the kidneys, the liver, the intestines, and the lungs*. Of these the first is the most important, as it is calculated that two-thirds of the component parts which have been used, evaporate by the insensible perspiration of the skin.

6th. To stimulate the senses in an agreeable manner, and with moderation. Man, in consequence of the superiority of his organization, as has been already shown, and of his higher physical perfection, is susceptible of

\* In defining corrupted air an accurate distinction should be made between *impure* air and *saturated* air, which in general are confounded. Corruption of the air may consist either in too small a quantity of oxygen gas, or in the chemical mixture; and air so corrupted may be called *impure* air, in opposition to *pure* vital air; or it may be corrupted by foreign component parts received into it, and then it is called *saturated*.



## OF PROLONGING LIFE

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second indication, that is, a proper hardening; but the more relaxed the vessels are by nature, the contrary must be the case.

Further, the different innate *temperaments*, under which I comprehend the different degrees of irritability, and their relation to the powers of the soul. The more a subject inclines to the *phlegmatic* temperament, the more and the stronger irritants may be employed. A degree of irritation, which in a sanguine temperament would waste and exhaust, is here beneficial; necessary to promote a sufficient degree of vital operation, and a means of restoration. The case is the same with the *melancholic* temperament: it requires more irritation, but variegated, of a pleasant nature, and not too violent. The more the *sanguine* temperament prevails, the more cautiously and moderately must all stimulants as well physical as moral be employed; and in this respect, the *choleric*, where the smallest stimulus may often produce the most violent exertion and rapid wasting, requires the greatest attention.

*The periods of life.*—Children and young people have far more vital power and irritability; their structure is less solid; and the change of their component parts is more rapid. Much less irritation must, therefore, be here given, because a small irritation excites strong reaction. More regard must be proportionally paid to restoration and hardening. In old age, on the other hand, everything called irritation may be employed in a stronger degree. What in infancy would be consumption, is here restoration. Milk is wine for children; wine is milk for old people. Old age requires, therefore, on account of the great rigidity connected with it, not an increase of that quality by the second indication, but a lessening of it by means of emollients and moistening things, meat-broths, strong soups, and the tepid bath.

Lastly,—*Climate*, also, makes some difference. The more southern it is, the greater is the irritability; the stronger continual irritation is, the more rapid will the

more refined as well as more exalted impressions; and, consequently, they must have a greater influence on the physical state of his life than on animals. By these means there is opened for him a new source of restoration, which is denied to animals; the enjoyment and stimulus of sensual pleasure, when not carried to too great a length.

7th. Putting the mind in an agreeable frame; joyful and moderate affections; a succession of new, grand ideas; creating, combining, and varying them. These more exalted pleasures, exclusively peculiar to man, belong to this catalogue of the means which contribute to prolong his existence. Hope, love, and joy are therefore happy affections; and there is nothing which tends with so much certainty and so generally to preserve life and health as *cheerfulness* and *serenity* of mind. Such a disposition keeps the vital power in a proper uniform state, promotes circulation and digestion, and assists, in a very powerful manner, the function of insensible perspiration. Happy, therefore, even in a physical point of view, is that man on whom Heaven has bestowed a contented and serene mind, or who, by improving and cultivating his moral faculties, has been able to procure that blessing. He has within himself the noblest and purest balsam of life.

The principles here laid down contain the fundamental rules on which every rational general plan for prolonging life must be founded. But what is necessary in regard to every dietetic and medicinal precept is necessary here, that, in applying them, regard must be had to special cases; and that, therefore, they must be more accurately modified and determined.

The following circumstances, in particular, are to be attended to in the application of them:

*Difference of constitution in the subjects*, in regard to their simple component parts and vessels. The drier, the harder, and more rigid the state of the body naturally is, the less need there will be for employing the means of the

second indication, that is, a proper hardening; but the more relaxed the vessels are by nature, the contrary must be the case.

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Lastly,—*Climate*, also, makes some difference. The more southern it is, the greater is the irritability; the stronger continual irritation is, the more rapid will the

stream of life flow, and the shorter will be its duration. Great attention is here necessary that this exhausting of the power, by too strong irritation, may not be accelerated. In a northern climate, on the other hand, where the temperature being cooler concentrates the power more, and keeps it together, this is much less to be apprehended.

# ART OF PROLONGING LIFE.

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## PART THE SECOND.

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I now proceed to the most important part of this Treatise, the Practical Art of prolonging Life; and I can now make known with confidence, and on good grounds, those means by which alone prolongation of it is possible. If they are not so specious, so boasting, and so mysterious as those commonly recommended, they have this advantage, that they may be everywhere found without expense, nay, that they in part lie within ourselves; that they are perfectly consistent with reason, as well as experience; and that they prolong, not merely life, but also the enjoyment of it. In a word, according to my idea, they deserve the name of universal remedies, much more than all the panaceas of quackery and imposture.

We are continually surrounded by the friends and the enemies of life. He who keeps company with its friends, will become old; but he who prefers its enemies, will shorten his existence. It might be expected of every prudent man, that he would prefer the former, and be always on his guard against the latter; but it is an unfortunate circumstance that these enemies of life are not all public and known. They, in part, carry on their attacks secretly and imperceptibly; so that some of them assume the mask of life's best friends. It is, therefore, difficult to discover them; and some we even harbour within our own bosoms.

The principal part of this Art, then, will consist in being able to distinguish our friends from our enemies,

and in learning to guard against the latter. In other words, the Art of prolonging Life may be divided into two parts :

I. Guarding against the enemies of life, and those means which shorten it.

II. The knowledge and use of those means which tend to prolong it.

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### MEANS WHICH SHORTEN LIFE.

ACCORDING to the principles before laid down, the only grounds on which the duration of life depends, it will not be difficult to determine in how many different ways it may be shortened.

- 1st. Everything must shorten it which lessens the sum of the vital power ;
- 2nd. Everything that takes from the organs of life their duration and renders them unfit for use ;
- 3rd. Everything that hastens vital consumption ;
- 4th. And everything that prevents restoration.

Everything that shortens life may be comprehended in these four classes ; and we have now a standard by which the greater or less mischief, occasioned by their influence, can be determined and appreciated. The more these four properties are in anything united, the more dangerous and hostile will it be to our vital duration ; and the fewer it contains, it will be less so. Nay, there are mixed substances which present as it were two sides, one friendly, and another hostile ; that is to say, which possess one of the above properties, but at the same time are more favourable and beneficial to us than hurtful. These may form one peculiar class, but we shall here, according to

their prevailing quality, assign them a place, either among those things which are friendly, or those which are hostile.

Between those things which shorten life, there is a difference still more important. Some act slowly, successively, and often very imperceptibly. Others, on the contrary, violently as well as suddenly; and these may be rather named *the destroyers of life*. To these belong certain diseases, and the various kinds of violent death, as they are properly called. The latter, in general, are much more dreaded than the former, because their effects are more perceptible and more terrible: but I can assure my readers, that they are at bottom much less dangerous than these secret enemies; for they are so open that people can be much sooner on their guard against them than against the former, which carry on their destructive approaches in private, and daily steal from us some part of life without our perceiving it, though the loss in the end may amount to a sum truly alarming.

I must here make one melancholy remark, which is, that the enemies of our life have, in modern times, dreadfully increased; and that the degree of civilization, luxury, refinement, and deviation from nature, in which we at present live, by so highly exalting our intensive life, tends also to shorten, in the same proportion, our existence. We shall find, on close examination, that men appear, as it were, to have anxiously studied how they might deprive each other of life secretly and imperceptibly, and often in the most ingenious manner possible. Much more precaution and attention are, therefore, now necessary in order to secure ourselves from danger.



## CHAPTER I.

## Delicate nursing and treatment in infancy.

**THERE** is no surer method of rendering the vital thread of a being from its origin short and perishable, than by giving it, during the first years of life, which may be considered as a continued generation and expansion, a very warm, tender, and delicate education; that is, by guarding it from every breath of cool air; burying it for at least a year among pillows and blankets, and keeping it like a chicken in a real state of hatching; not omitting, at the same time, to stuff it immoderately with food; and, by coffee, chocolate, wine, spice, and such like things, (which for children are nothing else than poison,) to irritate it beyond measure, and to render its whole vital activity too strong and violent. By these means its internal consumption is from its birth so accelerated, its intensive life is so early exalted, and its organs are rendered so weak, tender, and sensible, that one may assert that, through two years treatment of this kind, an innate vital capacity of sixty years may be reduced one half; nay, as experience unfortunately shows, to much less, without reckoning those evil accidents and diseases which may besides be the consequence. The premature expansion of our organs and powers is by nothing so much hastened as by such a forced education; and we have before proved what an intimate connexion there is between rapid or slow expansion, and a longer and shorter duration of life in general. Speedy ripening carries always along with it\*

\* One of the most remarkable instances of the prematurity of nature was Louis II., King of Hungary. He was born so long before the time that he had no skin. In his second year he was crowned; in his tenth he succeeded; in his fourteenth he had a complete beard; in his fifteenth he married; in his eighteenth he had gray hair, and in his twentieth he died.

speedy destruction. This, certainly, is one great cause of the dreadful mortality which prevails among children. But men overlook those causes which lie nearest to them, and assume rather the most absurd, in order that their minds may be at rest, and that they may have as little to do as possible.

## CHAPTER II.

## Physical excess in youth.

"As youth is the period of growth, of forming and collecting the powers of the future man, every kind of excess calculated to weaken or exhaust the vital powers should be carefully guarded against. There are certain active properties which belong to this period, such as muscular motion, which can hardly be carried beyond the bounds of health. But the excesses most to be dreaded are those which spring from a too early anticipation of the future man, in which the imagination and the feelings play a conspicuous part. Youth, it cannot be too often repeated, is the time for storing strength, both physical and moral; and every act which can in any way impede or frustrate this all-wise intention of Nature, will tend to lay the foundation of a weak and imperfect body, and shorten the days of its possessor. Among the passions of the future man, which, at this period, should be strictly restrained, is that of physical love; for none wars so completely against the principles which have been already laid down as the most conducive to long life; no excess so thoroughly lessens the sum of the vital power; none so much weakens and softens the organs of life; none is more active in hastening vital consumption; and none so totally prohibits restoration.

I might, if it were necessary, draw a painful, nay, a frightful picture, of the results of these melancholy excesses; but I refrain, in the hope that this simple caution will be sufficient. To my youthful readers I will simply say, *Be wise in time*. Experience may appear a harsh, but, nevertheless, she is a just monitor."—EDITOR.

## CHAPTER III.

## Overstrained exertion of the mental faculties.

**MENTAL** as well as bodily excess, is attended with destructive consequences; and it is worthy of remark, that too great exertion of the mental faculties, and the waste of the vital power connected with it, produce on the health and vital duration almost the same effects as a waste of the physical powers—loss of the power of digestion, depression, dejection, weakness of the nerves, consumption, and premature death.

Much, however, depends here on the difference of structure and constitution; and those who have naturally a stronger and more active organization of soul, must suffer less from such exertion than those who are destitute of that advantage. Those, therefore, are most affected by it, who, with a moderate structure of mind, attempt to force it beyond its powers; and that excessive mental exertion which we make involuntarily, and without pleasure in the object of it, will hence weaken us most.

But it may here be asked, What is meant by excess in mental exertion? This, in general, is as difficult to be defined as excess in eating and drinking; because the whole depends on the difference in the capacity and state of the mental powers, and these are as different as the powers of digestion. That may be excess of mental exertion for one, which is not so for another, endowed with stronger faculties. The circumstances, also, under which that function is exercised, make a very essential difference. I shall, therefore, define more accurately what is to be understood by excess in the function of thinking.

1st. When one, while employed in abstruse thought, neglects too much the body. Every irregular exertion of our powers is hurtful; and as a man is infinitely more weakened when he exercises his thought without attending to bodily exercise, it is equally certain that those can undergo more mental labour, and with much less injury to their health, who, in the mean time, give to the body suitable and periodical exercise.

2nd. When one thinks too incessantly on the same subject. The same law prevails here as in regard to muscular motion. When one moves the arm continually in the same direction, one, in a quarter of an hour, will become more fatigued than if the limb had been moved two hours in various directions. Nothing exhausts so much as uniformity in the pursuit and employment of the mental powers; and Boerhaave tells us that after having bestowed intense study, for a few days and nights, on the same object, he fell suddenly into such a state of lassitude and relaxation, that he lay some time in an insensible and deathlike condition. A proper change of objects is, therefore, the first rule in order to study without injury to the health, and even to accomplish more work upon the whole. I am acquainted with great and intense thinkers, mathematicians, and philosophers, who, at an advanced period of life, are still happy and contented; but I know also that they have made this variety a law, and that they always divide their time between these abstract studies and reading history, agreeable poetry, travels, and works of natural history. It is of great benefit, in this respect, to unite always a practical with a speculative life.

3rd. When one employs the mind on too abstract or difficult subjects; as, for example, problems of the higher mathematics and metaphysics. The object makes a very essential difference. The more abstract it is, and the more it obliges one to disengage one's self from the sensual world, and, as it were, to insulate the mind separated

from the body, the most unnatural state, without doubt, that can possibly be, the more weakening and overstraining is its effect. Half an hour of such abstraction exhausts more than a whole day employed in translation. But here, also, a great deal is relative. Many are born for such labour, and have those powers and that frame of mind which it requires; while, on the other hand, many are destitute of both, and yet endeavour to force them. It appears to me very singular that, when it is requisite to raise up a corporeal burden, people always first try it by their strength, to discover whether it be not too heavy for them; but in regard to a mental burden, never consult their powers to know whether they are sufficient to sustain it. How many have I seen miserable and enervated, merely because they attempted to dive to the depths of philosophy without having philosophical heads! Must every man, then, be a philosopher by profession, as seems to be the mode at present? In my opinion, a particular organization is necessary for that purpose; and it may be left to the chosen few to investigate and unfold the secrets of philosophy; as to others, let them be contented with acting and living like philosophers.

4th. I consider it also as excess, when one labours always in creating and never in enjoying what has been created by others. The labour of the mind may be divided into two parts: the *creative*, which produces of itself and gives birth to new ideas; and the *recipient*, or passive, which merely receives and enjoys foreign ideas, as, for example, by reading or hearing others. The former is by far the most exhausting; and one ought, therefore to vary them, and to enjoy them in turns.

5th. When one begins to overstrain the mind too early in infancy. At this period a small exertion is highly prejudicial. Before the age of seven, all mental labour is an unnatural state, and attended with consequences as fatal to the body as the most exhausting excess.

6th. When one studies *invita Minerva*, that is, applies

to subjects on which one labours involuntarily, and not *con amore*. The more inclination one has for any kind of mental enjoyment, exertion will be the less hurtful. More caution, therefore, is necessary in the choice of studies; and wretched must those be who neglect an object of so much importance.

7th. When one stimulates, strengthens, or prolongs mental exertion by artificial means. People employ commonly, for this purpose, wine, coffee, or snuff; and though these artificial helps of thought are in general not to be approved, because they always exhaust doubly, it must, however, be confessed, that, at those times when the labour of the mind does not depend upon the will, but on periods and hours, they cannot altogether be dispensed with; and on such occasions, a dish of coffee, a pipe of tobacco, or a pinch of snuff, may be the most sufferable. But let people be on their guard against excess; because an abuse of them must increase, in an incredible degree, the mischiefs of mental exertion.

8th. When one overstrains the mind during the time of digestion. This occasions double injury: one weakens one's self more, as more exertion is then necessary for thinking, and interrupts at the same time the important function of digestion.

9th. When one employs, in mental labour, that time which ought to be devoted to sleep; a custom highly prejudicial to life, and of which I shall speak more expressly when I come to treat on sleep.

10th. When one unites study with hurtful external circumstances; and of these there are two in particular, *sitting in a bent posture*, and *confined air*; which are often more destructive in their consequences than intense thinking itself. People, therefore, ought to accustom themselves to study lying, standing, walking, or riding on a hobby; not always in the closet, but sometimes in the open air; and they will then suffer much less from those diseases which are so incident to men of letters. The

ancient philosophers undoubtedly studied as much as the modern literati; and yet never suffered from bodily disease induced by such study. The sole cause of this was, that they meditated more, lying or walking, and in the open air; because they never drank coffee, or used tobacco; and because, at the same time that they exercised the mind, they never neglected the care and the exercise of the body.



## CHAPTER IV.

**Diseases. Injudicious manner of treating them. Sudden kinds of death. Propensity to self-murder.**

**DREADFULLY** has this host of the secret and open enemies of life increased in modern times. When one reflects how little a savage of the South Sea Islands knows of diseases, and then takes a view of an European compendium of pathology, where they are marshalled by regiments and companies, and where their number amounts to several thousands, one cannot help being alarmed to find that so much is possible for luxury, corruption of morals, unnatural modes of living, and excesses. Many, nay, the greater part of these diseases, are occasioned by our own fault; and it is equally certain that new ones may be created by the like conduct. Others came into the world no one knows when or how, and were altogether strangers to the ancients. These are the most inveterate and destructive; the smallpox, the measles, and scarlet fever: and these even are so far owing to ourselves, that we suffer them to spread and exercise their ravages, without forming any regulations to check them; though it is proved that, by a proper exercise of reason, with the help of those observations that have been collected, we might banish them from our boundaries, in the same manner as they were introduced.

The greater part of diseases act either as violent kinds of death; the means of suddenly stopping vital operation, like the apoplexy; or as the means of shortening it gradually, by being either totally incurable, or, even when they are cured, by leaving behind them such a loss of the vital power, or such weakness and derangement of the

nobler organs, that a body so affected can no longer attain to that term of life to which it was originally destined.

The following short view, collected from different bills of mortality, will show, in the clearest manner, how monstrous that loss is which mankind sustain at present by disease. Of a thousand persons who are born, 24 die at their very birth; teething carries off 50; convulsions and other diseases during the two first years, 277; the small-pox, which, as is well known, destroys one in ten, carries off 80 or 90; and the measles 10. If they are females, 8 die in childbed. The asthma, consumption, and disorders of the chest, at least in England, destroy 190; violent fevers, 150; apoplexy, 12, and the dropsy, 41. Of a thousand persons also, we can allow only 78 who die of old age, or rather at an advanced period of life; for the greater part of these will fall a sacrifice to accidental affections. In short, it hence appears, that nine-tenths of mankind die always prematurely, and by the effects of disease.

I must here mention also a new and detestable disorder, which tends to the immediate destruction of life, I mean a propensity to self-murder. This unnatural passion, which prevailed formerly through direful necessity and heroic resolution, has now become a disease, which, in the bloom of youth, amidst the most favourable circumstances, merely by disgust and satiety of life, can excite the most horrid and irresistible desire to deprive one's self of existence.\* There are, indeed, men in whom every source of vital sensation and vital enjoyment is so exhausted, in whom every germ of activity and happiness is so deadened, that they find nothing so insipid, so disagreeable, and so disgusting as life; that they have no longer any points of contact with the world which surrounds them; and that life, at last, becomes to them such an oppressive burden, that they cannot withstand the desire of getting rid of it.

\* In seventy-five years, twice as many people in London fall a sacrifice to suicide as to the pleurisy.

And these men, for the most part, are such as, by youthful dissipation, and too early a wasting of the powers and vigour which ought to be the seasoning of life, have exhausted themselves, and become incapable of relishing its enjoyments. Is it not natural that such unfortunate beings should prefer death without all sensation, to a living death which their life may undoubtedly be called?

But the mischiefs of these already too numerous and dangerous enemies are infinitely increased, because people in part treat them very improperly, and in general abuse medicine too much.

Among those improprieties which regard the treatment of diseases, I reckon the following:—When people, notwithstanding every proof of their mischief, suffer the causes of disease to remain in activity: when one, for example, evidently observes, that drinking wine, the use of too light clothing, or sitting up late at night, brings on disease, and yet continues these practices; also, when one totally mistakes the disease, or will not allow that any exists, by which means a very trifling indisposition may be converted into a serious malady. And here I cannot help particularly mentioning a negligence to which the lives of thousands are undoubtedly sacrificed, I mean neglecting a *catarrh* or *cough*. People in general consider this as a necessary, and, in part, useful evil; and in that respect they are right, if the *catarrh* be moderate and do not continue too long. But one ought never to forget that every *catarrh* is a disease, and may readily end in an inflammation of the lungs, or, what is more frequently the case, in an asthma or consumption; and I do not say too much when I assert, that one-half of all the asthmas arise from *catarrhs* which have been thus neglected. Such mischief follows when they continue too long, or have been improperly treated; and I therefore recommend the two following rules, which ought to be sacredly observed by every one who is attacked by a *catarrh* of the chest. One must not overlook a *catarrh* cough more than a fortnight; if it continue longer, it must be considered as a disease, and be

treated by a physician. Secondly, during the time every catarrh lasts, one must guard against violent heating of the body, cold, and the use of spices, wine, and other spirituous liquors.

It is also a too common mode of improperly treating diseases, that people often, partly from ignorance or prejudice, and partly through mistaken tenderness, do exactly the contrary of what ought properly to be done. Of this kind are, when people oblige the patient to eat, though he has no appetite; when, during feverish disorders, he is suffered to use beer, wine, coffee, meat-soups, and other rich and nourishing things, by which the slightest degree of fever may be changed into the most violent; when people, on the patient's complaining of a fever, and that cold which is connected with it, bury him immediately under bed-clothes, shut up the doors and the windows, and heat the air of the apartment as much as possible; and when they do not pay sufficient attention to cleanliness and ventilation. This injudicious treatment destroys more of mankind than disease itself; and is principally the cause why, in the country, so many strong sound men fall a sacrifice to death; why diseases there so readily assume a malignant quality; why, for example, the small-pox is more destructive there in winter than in summer, because people shut the doors and windows, and, by artificial means, keep up in the patient's bed-chamber a heat equally great perhaps as that which prevails during the summer.

And lastly, I reckon among these improprieties, when one consults no physician, or consults one that is unskilful, uses medicine injudiciously, has recourse to quacks, and employs *secret means, universal remedies, &c.*, of which I shall treat more at length when I come to the *rational use of medicine*.

The violent kinds of death also sweep off an immense number of mankind; and these, in modern times, have unfortunately made great progress. Not only have a more enlarged spirit of enterprise, the greater frequency of sea-

voyages, and more extensive trade, multiplied such accidents; but people have fallen upon inventions for accomplishing the object of shortening life in an incredibly quick and refined manner. I shall here mention only gunpowder, and several new sorts of poison, such as *Aqua Toffana*, *Succession Powder*, &c. Nay, the art of killing has now become a peculiar and exalted science.

## CHAPTER V.

Impure air. Men living together in large cities.

ONE of the greatest means of shortening human life is, men living together in great cities. Dreadful is the preponderance which the ravage thence occasioned has in the bills of mortality. In Vienna, Berlin, Paris, and London, the twentieth or twenty-third person dies annually; while in the country around them, the proportion is only one in thirty or forty. Rousseau is perfectly right, when he says that men, of all animals, are the least formed for living together in great multitudes. The breath of a man is deadly for his fellow-creature; and this is the case both in a proper as well as a figurative sense. The moisture, or, as it is commonly called, the thickness of the air, is not what alone makes it prejudicial, but the animalization which it acquires by so many people being crowded together. We can at most breathe the same air only four times; for it is then, from the finest support of life, converted by ourselves into the most deadly poison. Let one now only reflect on the atmosphere of such monstrous places, where it is impossible for an inhabitant to inspire a mouthful of air that has not been for some time already in the lungs of another. This produces a general secret poisoning, which, upon the whole, must necessarily shorten the duration of life. Those men who are able, ought to avoid living in great cities: they are open sepulchres for mankind; and not only in a physical, but in a moral point of view. Even in cities of moderate size, where perhaps the streets are somewhat narrow, people should prefer a residence in the suburbs; and it is at least their duty to quit the city atmosphere for an hour or half an hour every day, merely in order that they may inspire a little fresh air.

## CHAPTER VI.

Intemperance in eating and drinking. Refined cookery.  
Spirituous liquors.

THE first thing which, in regard to diet, can act as a shortener of life, is *immoderation*. Eating and drinking too much is prejudicial to life two ways. It overstrains the powers of digestion, and thereby weakens them. It prevents digestion, because with such a quantity the whole cannot be properly prepared; and crudities in the intestines, and bad juices, are the consequence. It increases also proportionably the quantity of the blood, and thereby accelerates circulation and life; and besides, it gives rise to indigestion, and the necessity of using evacuants, which always weaken.

*To eat too much*, means when people eat till they can eat no longer; and the following are the signs:—When one experiences a heaviness and fulness of the stomach, yawning, eructation, drowsiness, and confusion in the head. The old rule, which contains much truth, ought, therefore to be always observed: Give over eating while you have still some appetite left.

*To refined cookery* belongs to the same class. Unfortunately I must here exclaim against this friend of our palate, as one of the greatest enemies of life; as one of the most destructive inventions for shortening it, and in the following manner:—

1st. It is well known that the principal part of this art consists in making everything piquant and stimulating. Every article of food, therefore, is half composed, according to this preparation, of hot, stimulating substances; and instead of accomplishing, by eating, what is the natural object of it, nourishment and restoration, we increase

rather, by irritation, internal consumption, and actually produce the contrary. After a meal of this kind one has always an artificial fever; and those who use such food may justly say, *consumendo consumimur*.\*

2nd. The worst is, that people, by this cookery, are always induced to eat too much. They become such friends to their palate, that every remonstrance of the stomach is ineffectual; and as the palate is always tickled in a new and agreeable manner, the stomach has thrice or four times as much labour as it is capable of performing. For it is a very common fault, that one does not make a distinction between the appetite of the palate and that of the stomach; but considers that as a real, which is only a false, appetite; and this error is by nothing favoured so much as refined cookery. Man thereby loses, at length, one of the greatest supports of life, the property of knowing when he has had enough.

3rd. One grand maxim in this cookery is, by the most unnatural and most variegated compositions, to produce new stimulants, and new dishes. And hence it happens that things which singly and alone were perfectly harmless and innocent, acquire, by combination, properties altogether new and destructive. Acids and sweet substances, for example, do no hurt when used separately; but, when used together, they may become prejudicial. Eggs, milk, butter, and flour, are each, used by itself, very easy of digestion; but when joined together, and formed into a fat solid pudding, the produce will be extremely heavy and indigestible. It may, therefore, be laid down as a fundamental principle, that the more compounded any kind of food is, the more difficult it will be of digestion; and what is still worse, the more corrupt will be the juices which are prepared from it.

4th. A grand acquisition in the newest mode of cookery is the art of bringing nourishing juices into the body in the most concentrated form. Hence we have *consommés*, *ijs*, *coulus*, and many other things of the like kind. By

\* In consuming we are ourselves consumed.—EDITOR.



expression, and boiling, people have found means to concentrate the substance of several pounds of beef, capon, and marrow-bones, into the small size of a jelly or soup; and they imagine they have accomplished something great when they send such an essence of nourishment immediately, and at once, into the blood, without exposing the teeth to the trouble of chewing, or the stomach to the labour of digesting. That is to say, people imagine they can restore themselves full gallop; and this is the favourite system of those who consume themselves in that manner. But these people are miserably deceived; for,

In the first place, one can never deviate from the regulations of Nature without injury. Not without reason has it been made a law, that the stomach can receive only a certain quantity: a degree more would be too much for the whole. Everybody can admit only a proportionable quantity of nourishment; and this capacity of the whole is always in direct ratio with the stomach. Man here defrauds Nature: he goes beyond the first principle, if I may say so; and smuggles, as it were, into the body, thrice or four times as much nourishment as it is capable of receiving. The consequence is, a continual plethora of all the vessels; and this always destroys the equilibrium as well as the health, and, in the end, life itself.

Secondly, it has been established by Nature, on grounds equally good, that our nourishment should be used in a form rather coarse. The advantage of this law is, that our food is first chewed in the mouth, macerated and mixed with saliva: in the next place, that it is longer retained in the stomach, in order, by its stimulating quality, to incite the stomach to more reaction; consequently it is much better assimilated and changed into the nature of our substance. On this properly depends real restoration; for nourishment can pass into our bodies, and become truly useful to us, only after it has been, by the powers of the stomach, rendered homogeneous and similar to our substance.

By transgressing this first principle, one creates in the

body juices, which, because they have not been sufficiently assimilated, are unable to effect proper restoration; which, as foreign particles, tend rather to irritate; and thus promote consumption, much more than restoration.

In my opinion, therefore, it is highly proper that an art which prevents restoration, which fills us with raw undigested juices, and which increases internal consumption, should be considered, not as a friend of our life, but as one of its most essential enemies. One might almost imagine that it was invented to convert one of the noblest gifts of God into a secret poison.

Lastly, we may place in this class, of things that tend in a particular manner to shorten life, all *preparations of spirituous liquors*, which, under whatever name known, are, in that respect, highly prejudicial. When people drink these, they drink liquid fire. They accelerate vital consumption in a dreadful manner; and make life, in the properest sense, a process of burning.

## CHAPTER VII.

Passions and dispositions of mind which shorten life. *Peevishness.*  
Too much occupation and business.

CERTAIN habits and dispositions of mind, such as melancholy, care, dejection, fear, anxiety, faint-heartedness, and, in particular, avarice and hatred, which are hostile to life, claim a distinguished rank among those means which tend to shorten it.

All these exhaust the finest of the vital powers; destroy, in particular, digestion and assimilation; weaken the vigour of the heart; and, by these means, impede the important business of restoration. The first or melancholy affections act, however, negatively in shortening life. On the other hand, those of avarice and hatred have, as it were, a positive property of bringing on death. They not only deprive the body of its vital powers, but, as they incessantly sharpen the bile, they are continually preparing a secret poison; and by the general irritation of the bile, increase, in an extraordinary degree, self-consumption. That motto, therefore, is highly proper: *Avarice consumes itself.*

To these belongs that malignant disposition of mind known by the name of *peevishness*. Nothing can so much blast the bloom of life, shut up every access to pleasure and enjoyment, and change the beautiful stream of life into a stagnated puddle, as this disagreeable habit. I advise every one who regards his life to fly from this deadly poison, and never to suffer it even to approach.

*Fear*, also, deserves here a particular place. It belongs, in like manner, to those bad habits of mind which one can harbour or banish at pleasure.

Walter, an Englishman, who sailed round the world

with Anson, was conversing one day with young Berkenhout; and as the latter happened to mention the word Fear, Walter, with some emotion, replied, *Fear is a base passion, beneath the dignity of man.* And, without doubt, it is one of the most absurd: a passion which debases and degrades man, as much as its opposite passion, courage, can exalt and elevate him above human nature. Fear robs him of power, reflection, judgment, resolution; in a word, of all that pre-eminence which the human mind enjoys; and, to accustom children not to fear, ought to be one of the first principles of education. But, unfortunately, the direct contrary is the case. I shall here enlarge on two only of the most usual kinds of fear: fear of thunder, and fear of apparitions or spirits. Now he who is subject to both these may bid farewell to happiness and tranquillity. The period of night, which by its obscurity is so wisely destined for sweet repose, is to him the signal of the most painful uneasiness. While others enjoy peaceful sleep, he listens with trembling and dismay to the smallest sound; the sweat of horror bursts forth from every pore of his body; and he is more fatigued in the morning, than at the moment when he lay down.

The joyful season of summer is to him also a period of terror and dread; and every fine day brings with it the idea of thunder, and the apprehension of danger.

One may easily comprehend what destructive influence such continual misery must have on the duration of life. Fear is an incessant cramp; it contracts all the smaller vessels; the whole skin grows cold, and perspiration is completely checked. The blood is collected in the interior large vessels; pulsation becomes irregular; the heart is overcharged, and cannot move with freedom. The important business of circulation is therefore deranged. Digestion is also interrupted, and crampish affections take place. All the muscular power is palsied; the sufferer attempts to run, but is not able; he is seized with a general shivering; he breathes short, and with difficulty; in a word, fear has all those effects which are produced by

a mortal secret poison, and its consequences are equally pernicious in shortening life.

It is impossible for me to omit here a characteristic of modern times, which certainly deprives us of a valuable part of our life: namely, that unfortunate spirit of restless enterprise (*polypragmosine*), which at present subdues a great part of the human race; an incessant fickleness, and propensity to new undertakings, new labours, and new plans. The genius of our age seems to incline men, much more than is natural for them, to reflection, activity, speculations, and reformation of every kind; and to exercise with more vigour all the powers which they possess: for the great increase of luxury, by still multiplying its wants, makes new schemes and new exertions of the faculties always more necessary. Hence arises that endless uneasiness which destroys all sensation of internal tranquillity and contentment; which never suffers men to enjoy that degree of peace and relaxation indispensably requisite for restoring them; and which, consequently, in an alarming manner, accelerates consumption.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## The fear of death.

No kind of fear is attended with more unhappiness than the fear of death. He who is subject to it dreads something which is totally unavoidable, and against which we can never be a moment secure. He enjoys pleasure with trembling and anxiety; he denies himself everything, because everything may be the vehicle of death; and, by this everlasting apprehension of losing life, he loses it in reality. No one who feared death ever attained to a great age.

*Love life, and fear not death!* is a command and a prophecy, the only true frame of mind to become happy and old; for, whoever fears death may bid farewell to happiness. To him no enjoyment is pure; every pleasure is poisoned with the idea of death; he is always like a malefactor pursued; the enemy is continually at his heels; and yet there are an immense number of people who are not able to banish from them this disease of the mind. For the benefit of these I shall here lay down some rules, which, though they may not display much metaphysical acuteness, I can recommend as good preservatives against the fear of death; and which I know by experience, to have been effectual:

1st. Let a man make himself very familiar with the idea of death. He alone, in my opinion, is happy, who has so often, and in so undaunted a manner, looked this unavoidable enemy in the face, that, by long custom, it has at length become to him a matter of indifference. How much do those deceive themselves who imagine they have found, in banishing the thoughts of death, the best

remedy for the fear of it. Before they are aware, amidst the most lively enjoyment will the idea rush upon them, and derange them the more, the less they are acquainted with it. In a word, I can call those alone fortunate who have carried this custom so far, that in the moment of joy they can think of death without being depressed; and my readers may believe me, for I assert it on my own experience, that, by often dwelling upon this idea, and moderating its appearances, we shall at length acquire a wonderful indifference respecting it. Let us only turn our attention to soldiers, sailors, and miners. Where shall we find men more contented and happy, more susceptible of every joy? And for what reason? Because, by their continual approach to death, they have learned to despise it. He who no longer fears death is alone free; there is nothing else that can fetter his senses, disturb him, or render him unhappy. His soul is filled with exalted and undaunted courage, which strengthens the vital power, and which is therefore a positive means of removing this fear.

This custom is attended also with some concomitant circumstances which are undoubtedly of no little importance. It is an excellent help to enable one to continue honest and virtuous. On every occasion of doubt, when the question arises whether an action be right or wrong, let a man think only on the last hour of his life, and ask himself, Wouldst thou then do so; wilt thou then wish to have acted so? Innocence is certainly that happy state, that enjoyment of life, which can enable a man to think on death without terror. If a man harbour enmity or revenge against another, if he entertain a wish of avenging an injury done to him, let him only reflect on that hour, and on the state in which his thoughts will then be, and I engage that his ideas of enmity and revenge will immediately forsake him. The reason is, that, by thus changing the theatre of action, all those little selfish objects by which we are usually guided are removed; everything at once appears in its proper point of view,

under its just proportion; the deception vanishes, and nothing remains but what is real.\*

2nd. Many fear death much less than the operation of dying. People here form the most singular conception of the last struggle, the separation of the soul from the body, and the like. But this is all void of foundation. No man certainly ever felt what death is; and as insensibly as we enter into life, equally insensibly do we leave it. The beginning and end are here united. My proofs are as follows: First, man can have no sensation of dying; for to die, means nothing more than to lose the vital power; and it is the vital power by which the soul communicates sensation to the body. In proportion as the vital power decreases, we lose the power of sensation, and of consciousness; and we cannot lose life, without at the same time, or rather before, losing our vital sensation, which requires the assistance of the tenderest organs. We are taught also by experience, that all those who ever passed through the first stage of death, and were again brought to life, unanimously asserted that they felt nothing of dying, but sunk at once into a state of insensibility. Let us not be led into a mistake by the convulsive throbs, the rattling in

\* Allied with the fear of death is the foolish objection which some people have to making their wills, and doing that which none others can do so well as themselves,—namely, arranging their affairs. Indeed I have known some so irrational as to entertain alarm at the insurance of their lives; as though the thought on death could hasten its approach. The duty of making a will is one which ought to be performed by every person, the moment he arrives at man's or woman's estate, and the neglect of that duty I regard as a dangerous sin. The great Locke, in a letter to Lord King, has these memorable reflections on making his will:—"I shall not die the sooner for having cast up my reckoning, and, judging as impartially of my state as I can, I hope I shall not live one jot the less cheerfully the time that I am here, nor neglect any of the offices of life whilst I have it; for whether it be a month, or a year, or seven years longer—the longest any one out of kindness or compliment can propose to me—is so near nothing when considered and in respect of eternity, that if the sight of death can put an end to the comforts of life, it is always near enough, especially to one of my age, to have no satisfaction in living."—*Lord King's Life of Locke*, 2nd edit. p. 40.—EDITOR.



the throat, and the apparent pangs of death, which are observed in many persons when in a dying state. These symptoms are painful only to the spectators, and not to the dying, who are not sensible of them. The case here is the same as if one, from the dreadful contortions of a person in an epileptic fit, should form a conclusion respecting his internal feelings. From what affects us so much, he suffers nothing.

3rd. Let one always consider life, as it really is, a mean state, which is not an object itself, but a medium for obtaining an object, as the multifarious imperfections of it sufficiently prove; as a period of expansion and preparation, a fragment of our existence, through which we are to be fitted for and transmitted to other periods. Can the idea, then, of really making this transition; of ascending to another from this mean state, this doubtful problematical existence, which never affords complete satisfaction, ever excite terror? With courage and confidence we may, therefore, resign ourselves to the will of that Supreme Being, who, without our consent, placed us upon this sublunary theatre; and give up to his management the future direction of our fate.

4th. Remembrance of the past, of that circle of friends who were nearest and always will be dearest to our hearts, and who, as it were, now smile to us with a friendly look of invitation from that country of darkness, will tend also very much to allay the fear of death.

## CHAPTER IX.

Idleness. Inactivity. Languor.

BUT an opposite conduct, that of neglecting to exercise our powers, may tend also to shorten life; because, by these means, the organs will soon become unfit for use; and derangement of them, interrupted purification of the juices, and bad restoration must be the consequence. It was the first and unalterable destination of man, that he should earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. And this principle is fully confirmed, in a physical sense, by experience: he who eats without labour will never thrive. If the necessary proportion be not preserved between restoration and self-consumption, it is impossible to retain health or prolong life. If we consult observation, we shall find that no idler ever attained to a great age, and that those who have been distinguished by their longevity were all men whose lives had been extremely active and laborious.

But mental idleness is hurtful, as well as bodily; and I now come to a means of shortening life, which perhaps my readers did not expect, because it apparently makes the time appear to us so long: I here allude to languor. Let us examine the physical effects of it a little closer, and we shall see that this unpleasant state of mind is by no means a matter of indifference, but that it is attended with very important consequences to the condition of our bodies. What do we remark in a man who is subject to languor? He begins to yawn; this already betrays that the passage of the blood through the lungs is interrupted. The power of the heart and vessels suffers of course, and becomes too torpid. If the evil continue longer, accumulations and stoppages of the blood take place. The organs of digestion

acquire a tendency to weakness ; and inactivity and debility, melancholy, flatulency, and hypochondriac affections ensue: in a word, all the functions are thereby weakened and deranged ; and I think I may with truth affirm, that a state which disturbs the most important operations of the body, and which enfeebles the noblest powers, is a shortener of life also.

Languor, in a physical as well as a moral view, is a state of danger. Weikard mentions the instance of a child born of poor parents, who were obliged to earn their bread by their daily labour. The state of this child, from its birth, was therefore languor. At first the parents suffered it to lie alone in its cradle, where it spent its time in looking at its hands and feet. When it became bigger, it was always shut up in a hen-house, where it could see out only through a small hole. What was the consequence? The child, when it grew up, remained heavy and stupid ; showed no signs of reason, and could scarcely speak.

Nay, it is attended with effects still more destructive. With a melancholy temperament, languor may at length conduct one to self-murder. A dull English author, who has written a voluminous work on suicide, relates, that he one day met one of his countrymen who exhibited every appearance of deep thought. "Whither art thou going, my friend?" said the author. "To the Thames, to drown myself." "I beg of you," replied the author, "to return home for this time, and to read over my work on suicide." "God forbid!" answered the other. "It was reading that cursed, tedious book, which excited in me such a dreadful disgust of life that I am now firmly resolved to drown myself."

But I think I hear every one ask, What in the world is the best remedy for languor? It accompanies us to the ball, to the play-house, to the tea-table, in our walks ; in short, it is impossible for us to get rid of it! What you say is perfectly true, but it does not relieve us. There is only one, but not a very agreeable, remedy for it, and that is *regular employment*.

## CHAPTER X.

Overstrained power of the imagination. Imaginary diseases.  
Sensibility.

IMAGINATION was given us as the seasoning of life; but as physical seasoning must not be made our daily nourishment, our mental life, in the like manner, must not abuse this seasoning of the soul. Too much of it will, indeed, exalt vital sensation; but one thereby increases intensive life together with consumption, and prevents restoration, as is proved by the meagreness of such people as have fervid imaginations. Besides one, by these means, disposes the body to sudden as well as violent revolutions, which may become dangerous to life, because, with an overstretched imagination, it is possible for a small spark to produce a most dreadful explosion. He, therefore, who wishes to live long, must never suffer this power of the soul to assume a superiority, or to occasion a continued state of exaltation; he will apply it to that purpose for which it was bestowed upon us, to give a higher lustre to the agreeable moments of life, to season the unfortunate or insipid, and to enliven the melancholy.

This faculty may be highly prejudicial to life, when it acquires certain tendencies, which, by their collateral effects, produce double mischief; and of these, two appear to me to be particularly dangerous, a propensity to *imagine diseases* and *too great sensibility*.

The first disease of the imagination is principally peculiar to hypochondriacs; but may be excited in those who are not physicians, if they read works on medicine, which they do not, like professional men, apply to the art, but to their own persons; and who, for want of sufficient know-

ledge, conjecture often very erroneously. Of this I have seen astonishing instances. Not only people who, with features perfectly regular, supposed that their noses stood awry; and who, though slender and sound in every respect, could not get rid of the idea that they were in the last stage of the dropsy, but I have seen a lady who, if asked whether she had not this or the other local disorder, felt in a moment every symptom of it. Having asked her if she had not the headache, she was instantly seized with it; and on asking, in the like manner, respecting the cramp in the arm, and the hiccup, both these affections immediately took place.

Tulpius mentions the instance of a man who, by reading a great number of medical and chirurgical books, became quite frantic.

Monro saw a man, who, by studying medicine under Boerhaave, had become hypochondriacal. Whenever he attended any of Boerhaave's lectures, he always imagined that he was affected with the disease which had been the subject of it. By these means he was a continual living commentary on the science of physic; but he had scarcely gone half through this destructive course of medicine, when he found himself so wretched and exhausted that he was obliged to give up the study altogether. Nay, we have had the instance of a person who imagined himself to be actually dead, and who, therefore, would have been starved, had not a friend, who pretended to be dead also, persuaded him that it was customary in the other world to eat a sufficient quantity daily.

The misfortune attending this weakness not only is that it occasions constant fear and dread, and that many diseases are actually excited because people suppose they are afflicted with them, but it induces patients to have recourse to useless and preposterous medicines, and to quackery without end, which often consume the body much more rapidly than the disease itself would, did it really exist.

No less dangerous is the second disease of the imagina-

tion, *sensibility*; a romantic turn of mind, melancholy enthusiasm. It is altogether the same whether one really suffers under distressful events, or, by reading romances and indulging sensibility too much, has made one's self so feelingly alive to every impression as to be overcome by the sensation it occasions. Nay, the latter case is the more prejudicial; as the one is the natural state, but the other artificial; and its affections are, therefore, more violent and stronger. We have already seen how highly destructive melancholy is to the vital power and to every vital movement. One may easily comprehend, then, how baneful such a state must be, which subjects the mind to continual affliction at the hazard of life, and which cannot partake in refined pleasures without tears and heart-breaking sensations. What extinction of all energy, of all cheerfulness and courage! Two years spent in such a state of anguish, would undoubtedly shorten life in a considerable degree.

## CHAPTER XI.

Poisons physical as well as infectious.

By these I understand all those substances which, even in small quantity, are capable of producing very prejudicial or destructive effects on the human body. Of these there is a great abundance in nature, and of various kinds. Some act violently, others secretly; some suddenly, others slowly; some externally, others internally; some visibly, others invisibly; and it cannot be denied that they may be classed among the most general and the most dangerous enemies of life.

I consider it, therefore, very necessary, as an essential part of that universal knowledge which ought to be cultivated among mankind, that every one should learn to know and to guard against these poisons; because people otherwise may, through mere ignorance and inattention, be liable to be poisoned a thousand ways. Animals have instinct to enable them to distinguish and to avoid poisons; man has reason and experience; but these, in this respect, are far from being sufficiently employed. My object, therefore, here, is to give mankind such a comprehensive knowledge and conception of their danger as may induce them to guard against these enemies of life.

It is a very hurtful prejudice that people, in common, consider nothing as poisonous but what can be received through the mouth. On the contrary, we may be poisoned externally, as well as internally, through every part of our bodies, so far as they have absorbing vessels; through the mouth and stomach, through the whole superficies of the skin, the nostrils, the ears, and the lungs, by means of bad air. The only difference is, that the effects, in many parts,

take place slowly; in others, rapidly; and that many kinds of poison have an effect, in particular, upon one part, and some upon another.

I divide poisons in general into two classes, *physical* and *contagious*; the latter of which are distinguished by their being generated in a living body, and possessing the power of communicating themselves to another.

Among *physical* poisons, a knowledge of the following is particularly necessary:—

*Arsenic*, better known under the name of rat-poison, is the most violent of all. The smallest dose (five or six grains) is sufficient to destroy a person with the most excruciating torture. Numberless are the instances of people having suffered a severe death from it, but rather through ignorance and carelessness than through intention. I am of opinion, therefore, that it would be much better if this horrid poison were entirely banished; especially as it is of so little use, and is employed almost for nothing else than to kill rats and mice. At any rate, it ought not to be kept by grocers and apothecaries, near drawers where there is coffee, sugar, or any article used as food. In the mean time, I consider it as my duty to call the public attention to a few ways in which poisoning by arsenic may very easily be possible; in which it often happens; and to warn mankind against them. One of the most frequent is, when it is used to destroy vermin. If one reflects how many people have been deprived of existence by poison destined for mice, this practice ought to be altogether abandoned. Let not any one imagine that all danger may be prevented by great caution. I know an instance where some sweet milk, standing in a cellar, was poisoned by mice who had used some of it after eating rat-poison. It is much safer to employ for the same purpose poison-nuts, (*Nux vomica*); which are far less hurtful to man, but at the same time are a strong poison for animals. Another kind of poisoning with arsenic, less observed, is that by means of arsenical colours. Painters by profession know how to secure themselves against it; but amateurs and children should



be very cautious in using such colours, and at any rate avoid that bad practice of drawing the brush through their mouth. Equally dangerous are toys painted with these colours, which ought never to be allowed. Lastly, I advise every one to guard against a method of poisoning with arsenic which is practised by quacks and mountebanks. These impostors sell abundance of drops, as a cure for the cold fever, which contain nothing but arsenic. They indeed often cure the disease immediately; but they occasion consumption afterwards, and other fatal consequences. Let people, for Heaven's sake, avoid all such arcana.

A poison no less dreadful is *lead*. It is, perhaps, so far more terrible, as it acts more secretly as well as more slowly; does not discover itself immediately, by such violent effects; and because people may be completely ruined by it, before it is known that they are poisoned. With this substance, in particular, poisoning is possible several ways, which the greater part of the public have never remarked, and against which I must here put them on their guard. In the first place, when people daily swallow with their food and drink some portion of lead, the most dreadful symptoms, impossible to be cured, may at length break out, often even at the end of some years. This happens when victuals are dressed in vessels made of tin, which contains much lead, or in such as are badly glazed; or when one drinks wine adulterated with lead. Another very usual method of poisoning is by painting the face with white-lead, using washes made from lead, &c. All paints are prejudicial, but chiefly the white, because the whole of them almost contain white lead; and the leaden particles may be conveyed into our bodies, as well through the skin as through the stomach. Lastly, poisoning by means of apartments newly painted with white lead, or oil-varnish, ought not to be forgotten. Whoever inhabit these too soon, may, in particular, receive the poison into their lungs, and become hectic and asthmatic.

To the same class belong, also, *quicksilver*, *antimony*, and *preparations of copper*; which ought all to be consi-

dered as noxious poisons, and which should be guarded against, particularly the last, in regard to cooking victuals in copper vessels. Even the greater part of neutral salts, when used in too great quantity at once, and not sufficiently dissolved in water, may be attended with poisonous effects. I have met with some instances where an ounce, or an ounce-and-a-half of alum or saltpetre, taken at once, instead of Glauber's salts, excited every symptom of the most violent poison, and which could not be removed but with difficulty.

The vegetable kingdom contains a multitude of poisons, which partly occasion death by torpor, such as *opium* and deadly nightshade; and partly by burning and inflammation, as *mezezon* and *euphorbium*. Great mistakes are committed here, also, through inattention. Numberless are the instances where people, instead of chervil (*chénopodium*) for salad, have used hemlock; instead of parsnips, have eaten the roots of henbane; instead of common mushrooms, poisonous fungi; or used the berries of the nightshade, mezezon, &c., by which they brought on death. In every seminary of learning, therefore, a sufficient knowledge of all the poisonous plants growing in the neighbourhood should be taught.

The poisonous plants most pernicious, and which it is most necessary to know and guard against, are the *belladonna*; hemlock (*cicuta*); henbane (*hyoscyamus*); wolfsbane (*aconitum*); foxglove (*digitalis*); nightshade (*solanum*); darnel (*lolium temulentum*); mezezon (*Daphne*); several sorts of the ranunculus; poisonous lettuce (*lactuca virosa*); and the laurel-cherry (*laurocerasus*). To these belong also bitter almonds, which, according to the latest experiments, contain a deadly poison, not inferior to that of the laurel.

The air even, in which we live, can be poisoned so as to destroy us either suddenly or secretly. I shall here speak, in the first place, of that poison which we ourselves communicate to the atmosphere by living and breathing. Living beings consume, in a certain quantity of air, that

pure substance which we call vital air (oxygen); and, in place of it, give back an impure substance (carbonic acid gas) not fit for breathing. If a great multitude of people are shut up in a small space, death may soon be the consequence.\* If the space be larger, and the number less, though death may not ensue, the effects may be still prejudicial. All places, therefore, where numerous bodies of people are crowded together, ought to be avoided; particularly when they have not a sufficient height or free passage for the air. This is most frequently the case in play-houses. One of the surest signs of the air being poisoned, is when the lights will no longer burn clear and readily, or here and there go out of themselves. In an equal degree is it then unfit for life, because fire and life require the same part of the air for their support. Those who keep their sitting apartments or bed-chambers always closely shut, expose themselves to a slow poisoning of the like kind. In the same manner may the air be poisoned when a great many lights are kept burning in a close room. And the case is the same when one sleeps in a close bed-chamber where coals are burning, by which death is often the consequence. When one keeps in a close bed-chamber, during night, a great many plants and shrubs, the air experiences a similar kind of poisoning; while, on the other hand, the same plants, in the day time, and exposed to the sun, render the air more pure and wholesome. Evaporation from putrid substances is capable of producing the like effect. The strong smelling effluvia of flowers can communicate to the air, in close apartments, a pernicious, and even a deadly quality also; and therefore it is not proper to keep in one's bed-chamber strong scented flowers, such as the narcissus, roses, &c.

But far more important and dangerous appear to me the class of *infectious poisons*, to which I now proceed; and I

\* This is sufficiently proved by the dreadful instance which happened in the black hole at Calcutta, where, of 146 Englishmen, confined scarcely twelve hours, 128 were destroyed by the air being thus poisoned.

earnestly request that my readers will pay the utmost attention to the observations I shall make respecting them. Concerning physical poisons, people may always procure information: there are works which treat of them; they are known, and consequently can be avoided. With infectious poisons the case is quite different. They have been overlooked, as unavoidable and necessary evils; they have not been much considered as poisons, but in regard to the diseases which they occasion; people poison, and are poisoned; and this dreadful secret trade is carried on daily and hourly, without men knowing or reflecting what they are about. Physical poisons, as is proper, have been subjected to police laws: the State takes care that they shall be carefully kept, and that the use of them be limited; and those who wilfully administer them to others, are treated as criminals, and punished. The infectious poisons, on the other hand, are restrained by no laws, by no police ordinances: they exercise their ravages among us without interruption; the husband poisons the wife, the son the father; and no one takes any trouble to remedy this evil.—Lastly, physical poisons hurt only the individual; whereas the infectious possess the peculiar power of reproducing themselves in every living being, and of multiplying without end; they injure, therefore, not only those poisoned, but render them new sources by which whole neighbourhoods and districts may be infected.

I could here produce the most melancholy instances of men who merely through ignorance were poisoned in this manner; and of some who infected others, even their nearest friends, because they were unacquainted with these poisons, and the way in which they are propagated. I, therefore, consider a knowledge on this subject so necessary, and so defective among the public, that I with pleasure embrace the present opportunity of saying something upon it, which may be of general utility.

Infectious poisons are such as can be no otherwise generated than in a living body; and which possess the

power of reproducing themselves when communicated to another, and of giving rise to the same corruption and disease which prevailed in the former. Each class of animals has one peculiar to itself, and which does not take any effect upon another. Thus mankind have some which do not attack animals: for example, the smallpox.\* Animals, on the other hand, are susceptible of some which do not affect men; as, the disease among horned cattle, and the glanders among horses.† I am acquainted with only one peculiar to men as well as animals, and that is the poison of canine madness.

A very remarkable difference between these poisons is, that some of them never appear again without fresh external infection; as, the smallpox, measles, and plague: while others may be again produced, without infection, merely by corruption, and certain changes which take place in animal bodies; and among the latter class are the putrid fevers. It has, therefore, been often asked, Whence did the poisons of the first class arise? And, indeed, it is difficult to answer this question. The analogy of the latter class, however, allows us to suppose that they were first generated in the human body, but through so rare a concurrence of external as well as internal circumstances that thousands of years, perhaps, must be necessary before the same thing can again happen. It hence follows, that these poisons, as they must always, in order to continue, be produced in a human body, may again cease, as soon as they have been deprived, either by accident or precautionary regulations, of an opportunity to regenerate. A consoling reflection, on which the extirpation, or at least banishment of them from certain districts depends; and of the truth of which we may be convinced by finding that some of these poisons, such as

\* The smallpox is met with in sheep; and the cowpox is now recognised as the smallpox of the cow. In my work on "Diseases of the Skin" I have recorded examples of human smallpox being communicated to cows.—EDITOR.

† Glanders is now too well-known to be communicable to man, and to give rise in him to a virulent and fatal disorder.—EDITOR.

those of the plague and leprosy, have, by wise establishments, been driven from among civilized nations. But this consequence is also equally well founded, that, by a new concurrence of uncommon circumstances and corruption in the bodies of animals, an entirely new poison of the like kind, hitherto unknown in the world, may be again created.

Before all these kinds of poison, however, can have effect, there is necessary, not only a communication or infection from without, but also a certain disposition or sensibility of the body. Hence that remarkable phenomenon, that many can be poisoned very easily, some with difficulty, and many not at all: nay that many of these poisons can affect us only once, because, by being once poisoned, the whole sensibility of the body, in regard to the infection, is destroyed; as we find to be the case in the smallpox and measles.

Infection may apparently be communicated in a great variety of ways; but it is always confined to this simple principle, *that immediate contact with the poison is necessary before it can be conveyed to another*. This, however, must be properly understood. One may come into immediate contact with the poison, either by touching the body of a diseased person, or any other body with which the poison is united, or to which it has attached itself; as, for example, clothes, furniture, &c. A few poisons of this kind have the property of diffusing themselves through the atmosphere, as those of the smallpox, measles, and putrid fevers; but this contaminated air remains poisonous only in the neighbourhood of the diseased, or, in other words, the atmosphere only around the diseased person is poisonous. If it be, however, mixed with and thinned by purer air, like every other poisonous solution, it ceases at length to have a poisonous effect; that is to say, the poison cannot be conveyed by the atmosphere to any great distance.

My principal view here is to enable that part of the public unacquainted with physic to guard against these

poisons; or, what cannot be a matter of indifference to any person of benevolence, to avoid communicating the poison to others when one is infected. I shall, therefore, first, give a few rules how people may secure themselves from infection in general; and then treat singly of those kinds of poison which appear most commonly among us, and show how they may be distinguished and avoided.

The best means by which people, in general, may secure themselves from infection of every kind, consist in the following rules:—

1st. Pay the utmost attention to cleanliness; for the greater part of the poisons of this kind are conveyed to us through the external surface of our bodies: and it is fully proved, that poison, already communicated, has been by cleanliness removed before it could actually produce any bad effect. I here allude, in particular, to frequent washing, bathing, rinsing the mouth, combing the hair, and often changing the linen, clothes, and bed.

2nd. Be careful to admit pure air into your apartments, to enjoy the free air often, and to give the body proper exercise. By these means, one will preserve the perspiration and vital power of the skin; and the more active these are, the less danger is to be apprehended from external infection.

3rd. Let people endeavour to keep themselves in good spirits, and preserve serenity of mind. Such a disposition is best calculated to support the counteracting power of the body, free perspiration, and the outward tendency of the juices, by which the catching of infection is much prevented. This rule is particularly to be recommended where putrid fevers prevail; and there also a glass of good wine may be serviceable.

4th. Avoid coming into close contact with people, the physical state of whose bodies you do not perfectly know; and, in particular, beware of touching them with parts which have no skin, or one exceedingly delicate and tender; such as wounds, the lips; as, by these, infection is soonest imbibed. Of the like nature is the touching of sub-

stances which a little before may have been used by others.

5th. When infectious diseases are prevalent in any district, I would strongly advise people not to go abroad at night, because one imbibes infection much more readily in the night than the day time.



## CHAPTER XII.

Old age. Premature ingrafting of it on youth.

THIS is the most unavoidable of all those means that tend to shorten life. It is a secret thief, as Shakspeare calls it, the necessary consequence of life itself: for, by the vital process, our vessels must become gradually more desiccated and unfit for use, our juices more acrid and less, the smaller vessels shrivelled, the organs incapable of performing their functions; and the earthy part, the surest means of our destruction, must gain a superiority.

It cannot, therefore, be altogether prevented. The question only will be: Is it in our power to bring it on sooner or later? And, unfortunately, this question must be answered in the affirmative. Modern times afford us astonishing instances of the possibility of bringing on premature old age, and of causing the periods of life to follow each other much more rapidly. We may see at present, particularly in great cities, men come to maturity in their eighth year; in their sixteenth, attain to the highest point possible of their perfection; in their twentieth, struggling with every infirmity, a proof that they are already on the decline; and in their thirtieth, have every appearance of exhausted age, such as wrinkles, dryness and stiffness of the joints, a crooked spine, loss of sight and memory, grey hair, and a tremulous voice. I once dissected the body of such an artificial old man, who had scarcely attained the age of forty; and found not only his hair grey, but the cartilages of the ribs, which do not become bones until the greatest age, totally ossified.

One, therefore, can imitate by art, in our climates, that

hastening of the periods of expansion as well as of old age, which, in warm countries, takes place naturally.

I must now say a few words on the art of ingrafting old age on youth. This is done by weakening very early the vital power as well as the juices, and giving to the vessels the highest possible degree of hardness, stiffness, and want of pliability, which characterizes old age.

I shall here lay before my readers the surest means to accomplish this, as it is of importance to know such prescriptions, in order that people may be better enabled to counteract them. If one, therefore, will only live altogether contrary to the following rules, one may be enabled to preserve one's self in a state of youth to an advanced period of life.

1st. Endeavour, by every art physical and moral, to attain to maturity as speedily as possible, and waste the vital power with as much profusion as possible.

2nd. Begin very early to expose yourself to the utmost fatigue. Forced journeys of several days, continual dancing, sitting up all night, and shortening every period of rest, will, in this respect, be of most service. By these means you will accomplish two objects, that of speedily exhausting the vital power, and that of making the vessels soon hard and brittle.

3rd. Drink abundance of wine and strong liquors. This is an excellent prescription to desiccate the body, and to make it become shrivelled.

4th. Care, fear, and sorrow, are extraordinarily well calculated to bring on, very early, every characteristic of old age. We have instances of persons acquiring grey hair in the course of one night spent under the highest degree of grief and terror. Now, one might believe, that certain causes are absolutely necessary to produce these affections: but there are people who understand, in a masterly manner, the art of seeing everything in a melancholy light, of dreading some evil from every man, and of finding in the most common circumstances abundant matter to excite wretchedness and misery.

5th. That system, carried too far, or at least badly understood, of hardening the organs by the means of cold, bathing frequently and for a long time in cold water; nothing can be more proper to produce every symptom of age.

But it is not enough that people now attain old age, in a period during which our ancestors were still young: they unfortunately go farther. They have found out the art of bringing into the world children with old age upon them. Such phenomena I have sometimes seen. These shrivelled beings enter upon the stage of life with the strongest features of age; and, after two weeks spent amidst misery and crying, they close their aged life, or rather begin existence by ending it. But I shall draw a veil over these horrid productions of parental dissipation, which appear to me like the embodied sins of the parents.

## PART III.

## MEANS WHICH PROLONG LIFE.

## CHAPTER I.

## Good physical descent.

IF we take a retrospective view of the principles on which longevity depends, and the properties necessary for promoting it, we shall readily perceive that much in particular will depend on the mass from which we are formed; what quantity of vital power is communicated to us at our creation; and whether a foundation be then laid for a strong or a weak constitution, a sound or a diseased structure of the vital organs. All this is intimately connected with the healthful state of our parents, and the important point of our first existence; and in that sense, to be of *good birth* is what ought to be wished in regard to every man. It commonly belongs to those unknown yet important benefits which we receive; and is a means of prolonging life. This advantage, however, we are not able to procure to ourselves; but we have it in our power, and it is our duty to communicate it to others.

Three points are here to be considered: the state of health in which the parents are; the moment of generation; and the period of pregnancy.

1st. *The state of health, or the vital stock of the parents.*—How important this is may be seen by the instance of whole families in which longevity has been as it were a privilege; like the family of the before-mentioned Parr, who not only attained to a great age himself, but also his

father and children. In the longevity of parents lies a great ground for enabling their children to attain to the same. This, therefore, ought to be a powerful motive to induce those who intend to have children to spare and preserve their vital power as much as possible. We are a copy of our parents, not merely in regard to the common form and texture, but in respect to particular weaknesses and faults of single parts. A foundation even for diseases, which have their root in our structure and constitution, may be thus communicated. I am convinced, above all, by repeated experience, that great weakening of the constitution by early excesses, communicates to children a peculiar weakness of the glandular and lymphatic system, which ends in the scrofula, as it is called; and occasions this disease to appear in the first months of life, or even at the very birth. The too youthful or too great age of the parents is likewise prejudicial to the strength and vital duration of the children.

2nd. *The moment of generation.*—This is of much more importance than commonly believed, and has great influence, both in a moral and physical view, on the life of the future being. The first germ of a new creature is here quickened; the first vital power is communicated to it. How much must the perfection or imperfection of the produce be determined by a perfect or imperfect, sound or diseased condition of the active causes? Is it not to be wished that parents would pay some attention to this remark, and never forget that the above moment is of the utmost importance; that it is the moment of creation; and that Nature, not without reason, has connected with it the highest exaltation of our existence? However difficult it may be to collect observations from experience on this subject, I have known some undeniable instances where children, begotten in the moment of intoxication, remained stupid and idiots during their whole life. Now, what can be effected by the highest extremity, may be done, on a small scale, by a mean degree; and why should it not be admitted, that a being procreated at the period

of ill-humour, bodily indisposition, or nervous debility, may carry with it, during its whole existence, some small particles of these evils? Hence the evident preference of the child of love to the children of duty. In my opinion, therefore, it is of the utmost importance, even in the married state, that this moment should be confined to a period when the sensation of collected powers, ardent passion, and a mind cheerful and free from care, invites to it on both sides; and this forms a new ground against the too frequent, forced, or mechanical enjoyment of wedded love.

3rd. *The period of pregnancy.*—Though the father, without doubt, is the original source from which the future being acquires its first quickening, its earliest breath of life, the general mass and most material part proceeds entirely from the mother. The latter is the soil from which the seed derives its juices; and the future constitution, the proper substance of the child, must principally assume the character of that being of whom it makes so long a part, and of whose flesh and blood it is actually composed. Besides, not only the constitution of the mother, but also other favourable or unfavourable causes, during the time of pregnancy, must have a great influence on the whole formation and life of the being. This is confirmed by experience. The child's state of health, and the greater or less strength of its constitution are determined, in a particular manner, much more according to the condition of the mother, than that of the father. By a weakly father a robust child can always be produced, provided the mother have a sound and vigorous body. The substance of the father is, as it were, in her ennobled. On the other hand, the strongest man will never obtain a lively, healthy child from a mother who is weak and sickly.

With regard to the protection of the child during pregnancy against all dangers and hurtful effects, we find a regulation which displays the provident care of Divine Wisdom. Though the most intimate connexion subsists

between it and the mother, and though for nearly a year it forms a part of her, and partakes of her nourishment and juices, it is secured not only against accidental injuries by its situation and floating in a watery element, but also against moral and nervous impressions by there being no nervous connexion between it and the mother. We have, therefore, numerous instances of the mother dying, while the child continued alive. Nature has even conjoined with this state a certain immunity from sickness; and it is a principle established by experience, that a pregnant woman suffers much less from infectious and other causes of disease; and that a female has never a greater probability of living than while in that condition.

So much have mankind been, at all times, impressed with the importance of this period, that, among ancient nations, a pregnant woman was considered as a person sacred and secure from injury, and that every one who hurt or ill-treated her was thought deserving of double punishment. Our age, unfortunately, has here made a difference, both in a physical and a political view. The weak nerved, sensible, and delicate constitution of the female sex, at present, renders the preservation of the fruit in the mother's womb much more uncertain and dangerous. The womb of the mother is no longer a place of safety, the undisturbed atelier of Nature. Through that unnatural sensibility which is now so peculiar to a great part of our women, they have become far more susceptible of a thousand prejudicial effects, a multitude of passions; and the fruit suffers by every mental affection, every alarm, every cause of disease, and even by the most trifling accident. It is, therefore, impossible that a child, in a place where its formation and expansion are every moment interrupted and disturbed, should acquire that degree of perfection and strength to which it was destined. And yet little attention do mankind pay, either in a civil or political point of view, to the importance of this condition. Who thinks, at present, on the sacredness of a pregnant woman; or, who regulate their be-

haviour to her, by reflecting that the life, or at any rate the physical and moral formation, of a future being may thereby be endangered? Nay, how few pregnant women take that care of this condition which it deserves! and how few are able to deny themselves that pleasure and those gratifications which may be attended with mischief!

In my opinion, therefore, the following rules may, with great propriety, be founded on these observations:

1st. Such highly weak-nerved and sensible people ought never to marry; if not through a regard for themselves, and on account of the sufferings which they may thereby avoid, at any rate out of compassion for the miserable race of which they would be authors. In the education of daughters, people above all things should be attentive to guard against this unfortunate sensibility; because, from a regard for the complexion, for appearance, and a multitude of other points which belong merely to etiquette, a contrary conduct is observed. And lastly, it is the duty of every man, when he chooses a wife, to be particularly careful that her nervous system be not too irritable. Should this be the case, the principal object of marriage, to produce sound and robust children, is entirely lost.

2nd. Women ought to pay more attention to this period, and to observe a good moral as well as physical regimen; for they have then in their power the degree of perfection or imperfection, of the good or bad structure of the mind and body of their child.

3rd. Men in general should have respect for a pregnant woman in this point of view; and, as the depository of a human being during its state of formation, treat her with every care, tenderness, and attention. Every husband, in particular, ought to make this a duty; and to reflect that he thereby watches over the life and health of his offspring, and deserves, in the fullest sense, the title of *father*.



## CHAPTER II.

## Prudent physical education.

THE physical treatment during the two first years of existence is, in particular, a very important circumstance in regard to the prolongation of life. That period ought properly to be considered as a continued generation. The first part only of formation and expansion takes place in the mother's womb; the second, which is no less important, takes place externally during the two first years of life. A child comes into the world as a being only half finished. The most important and delicate expansion, that of the nerves and organs of the soul, the organs of respiration, the muscular system, the teeth, the bones, the organs of speech, and all the other parts, both in regard to form and structure, now follows. One may readily comprehend, therefore, what influence the different circumstances, under which this continued process of formation and expansion is carried on, whether they act so as to impede, derange, and weaken, or to accelerate, must have on the perfection and duration of life. A foundation may certainly be here laid for slow or rapid consumption; for a body exposed to more or to fewer dangers.

All the precepts and rules respecting this period may be reduced to the following principles:—

1st. All the organs, but in particular those on which health and the duration of physical as well as spiritual life chiefly depend, must be completely formed, exercised, and brought to the highest degree of perfection. Among these I reckon the *stomach*, the *lungs*, the *skin*, the *heart*, the *vascular system*, and the *organs of thought*. A foundation may be laid for good lungs, by pure open air; and after-

wards, by speaking, singing, running; for a sound stomach by wholesome food, easy of digestion; but neither too strong and stimulating, nor too highly seasoned: for a sound skin, by cleanliness, washing, bathing, pure air, a temperature, neither too hot nor too cold, and, afterwards, by exercise: and for a strong heart and vessels, by all the above means; in particular, by wholesome nourishment, and afterwards by bodily motion.

2nd. The successive expansion of the physical and spiritual powers must be properly supported; and be neither impeded, nor too much promoted. Attention must be always paid to an uniform distribution of the vital power; for harmony and equality in the motions are the foundation of health and life. Bathing and free air will contribute to this in the beginning, and afterwards bodily exercise.

3rd. The sensation of the body in regard to disease, that is to say, its susceptibility of the causes of disease, must be hardened and blunted; as also its sensation of cold and heat, and afterwards that of small irregularities and fatigue. By these means two advantages will be gained; vital consumption, by the sensibility being moderated, will be lessened; and the derangement of it by diseases will be guarded against.

4th. Every cause and germ of disease in the body must be removed and banished; such as accumulations of phlegm, obstructions of the mesentery, and sharp acrid humours; faults which may arise from external hurts and impressions, too confined bandages, want of strict cleanliness, &c.

5th. The vital power itself must be always sufficiently nourished and strengthened, particularly by means of fresh air; and the healing power of nature must, above all things, be supported from the beginning, because it is the principal means which lies in ourselves for rendering the causes of disease ineffectual. This may be done chiefly by not accustoming the body at first too much to artificial assistance; otherwise Nature will be so used that

she will depend on foreign aid, and at length lose altogether the power of assisting herself.

6th. The whole operation of life and vital consumption must not at first be put into too great activity but be preserved in a moderate state; by which means its tone may be regulated for the whole life, and also for a slow and a long life.

The following simple means, which, in my opinion, form the principal part of physical education, may serve for accomplishing what is contained in the above precepts.

We must here, however, distinguish two periods. The *first period* is from birth to the end of the second year; and the chief points to be observed are as follow:—

I. The nourishment must be good, but suited to that tender age; easy of digestion, rather fluid than solid; fresh and sound; nutritive, but not too strong, stimulating, or heating.

Nature, here, is our best guide; as she has destined milk to be the earliest food of man. Milk possesses all the above qualities, in the most perfect degree: it is full of nutritive substance, but mild and nourishing, without heating or stimulating: it holds a mean rank between animal and vegetable food; unites the advantage of the latter, that of being less stimulating than flesh, with all the advantages of flesh: that is to say, its being already assimilated to us by preparation in a living animal body, which makes it more easily assume the character of our substance: and, in a word, it is altogether suited to the nature of an infant. \*

The body of a child lives quicker than that of a full-grown man, and changes oftener its component parts. Besides, it requires nourishment, not merely for its support, but for its continual growth, which is never so rapid during the whole course of life as the first year. It is evident, therefore, that it has occasion for abundance of concentrated nourishment; but as its powers of digestion are weak, it is not able to prepare and assimilate food that is solid or heterogeneous to its nature; such, for example,

as vegetables. Its nourishment must then be fluid, and already animalized; that is, be prepared and rendered like its nature in another animal body. It has, however, a great degree of irritability and sensibility; so that a small irritation, which a grown-up person would scarcely feel, may in it produce an artificial fever, or the cramp and convulsions. The nourishment of a child must on this account be mild, and exactly suited to its irritability.

I consider it, therefore, as one of the first laws of Nature, and a principal ground for a long and healthy life, *that a child should be nourished, during the whole of the first year, by the milk of its mother, or of a sound nurse.*

From this law of Nature people in modern times make many deviations, which undoubtedly have the most prejudicial influence on the duration of life and health, and which I must therefore here mention.

Some have attempted to nourish and educate children by slimy vegetable substances. These sometimes, and in particular cases, may be useful, but, without any other food, are certainly hurtful; for they do not afford sufficient nourishment, and, what is worse, do not become properly animalized, and retain still a part of their sour vegetable nature in the body of the child. Such food, therefore, produces weak meagre children, continually tormented with acidities at the stomach, sour eructations, phlegm, obstructions in the glands, and the scrofula.

Still worse is the custom of nourishing children with flour-pap; for this food, besides the disadvantage of its acid nature, as being a vegetable aliment, obstructs the tender lacteal vessels, and those of the mesentery; and lays a certain foundation for the scrofula and consumption of the lungs.

Others, to avoid these evils, and partly through anglo-mania, make choice of flesh nutriment for their children, and give them wine, beer, and other things of the like kind. This prejudice deserves in particular to be reprobated, because it seems daily to gain more advocates, because it agrees with the exciting method so much

approved at present, and because the mischief it occasions is not always sufficiently attended to by physicians. People say, in common, flesh is strengthening; and that is precisely what a child requires. But the grounds on which I found a contrary opinion are as follow :—There must always be a certain relation between the nourishment and the body to be nourished, between the irritation and the irritability. The greater the irritability, the stronger is the effect which may be produced by a small irritation; the smaller the former, the effect of the latter will be so much weaker. Now, this irritability in human life is always in an inverse ratio to the age. In the first period of life it is strongest; and it every year becomes weaker, till it is entirely extinguished by old age. We may therefore say that milk, in regard to its irritating and strengthening power, is as exactly proportioned to a child, as flesh to an adult, or wine to an old man. But if one give flesh nourishment to a child too soon, one gives it an irritation like that occasioned by wine to grown-up persons, which is much too strong, and not destined for it by Nature. The consequences are, that a kind of artificial fever is produced and kept up in the child, that the circulation of the blood is accelerated, its warmth increased, and that a habit with a tendency to violent inflammatory disorders is created. Such a child has a full blooming look; but the slightest cause may occasion a violent commotion in the blood; and when it arrives at the period of teething, or if attacked by the smallpox, or any other kind of fever, when the tendency of the blood to the head is so strong, one may rest assured that some inflammatory disorder, convulsions, or apoplexy will ensue. People in general believe that one can die only through weakness; but one may die also through too much strength and irritation; and this may take place by the injudicious use of irritating things. Besides, by giving such strong nourishment to children, one accelerates, from the beginning, their vital operation and consumption; the whole system and organs are put into too great activity; a foundation is

originally laid for a more vigorous but a quicker life; and, under the idea of strengthening, one really establishes the principal cause of a short life. One also ought not to forget that, by this early use of flesh nourishment, the expansive process of teething, and afterwards that of manhood, are hastened too much, a great means of shortening life; and that it has a bad influence on the whole character. All carnivorous men and animals are violent, cruel, and passionate; while, on the other hand, the use of vegetable food inclines men more to mildness and humanity. This I have often found confirmed by experience. Children who had used flesh too early, and in too great quantity, became always strong men, but passionate, violent, and brutal; and I very much doubt whether such a disposition be fortunate, either for the individuals, or for mankind in general. There are certainly cases in which the early use of flesh nourishment may be useful, particularly for weak children, educated without the mother's milk, and who suffer from acidities; but it is then to be considered as a medicine, and must be regulated and the quantity determined by a physician. What I have said respecting flesh is applicable still more to wine, coffee, chocolate, spiceries, and the like. It is, therefore, a very important rule, in regard to the physical education of children, that a child, during the first half-year, should taste no flesh, no flesh soups, no beer, and no coffee; but be nourished merely by the milk of its mother. In the second half-year, light soups may be admitted; but flesh itself ought never to be given till the teeth have appeared,—that is, till the end of the second year.

But as many insuperable circumstances may occur to prevent a child from being educated in the natural manner in which it ought; such, for example, as the nervous weakness of the mother, or her sickly asthmatic state, by which the child would lose more than it could gain in regard to its vital duration; and if a sound nurse cannot be procured, the melancholy necessity then arises of educating the child artificially; and though this method is always

injurious, in some measure, to the health as well as duration of life, it may be rendered less prejudicial by observing the following precepts:—Let the child, at least, where it is possible, derive its nourishment from its mother for the first fortnight, or month. One cannot imagine of how much benefit this is in the first period. As the best substitute for the mother's milk, sheep or ass's milk may be then given; but always immediately after it has been milked, and while it yet retains its natural warmth. It would be still better to let the child suck the animal. Should this be impracticable, let the child have a mixture of cow's milk and water, always lukewarm; and fresh milk, at least once every day. A remark of some importance here is, that one must not warm the milk, (otherwise it assumes a certain character of acidity,) but only the water which is added to it. With this artificial nourishment it is necessary to give, somewhat sooner, pap made of biscuit, pounded very fine, barley, sago, or saloop, boiled with half milk and water; also light, but not fat, bouillis and egg-water, that is, the yolk of an egg beat up in a pint of water and mixed with a little sugar. Potatoes during the two first years are prejudicial. However little I consider them unhealthful in general, they are certainly too hard of digestion for so tender a stomach, as they are of a clammy viscid nature.

II. Let the child, after the third week, (earlier in summer, but later in winter,) enjoy the free air every day, and continue this practice without any interruption on account of the weather.

A perfect similarity prevails here between children and plants. Give the latter the richest nourishment and warmth, but deprive them of air and light, they will become pale, withered, and stunted, and at length die. The use of pure free air, and of the vital component parts which it contains, is a nourishment as indispensably necessary for the support of life as eating and drinking. I have known people who remained weak and pale-coloured throughout their whole lives, because they were nurtured during their first years

like plants in a hothouse; whereas, on the other hand, the daily use of light and free air is the only means to produce a blooming complexion, and to communicate strength and energy sufficient to last one's whole life. This advantage also is of great importance, that a person is thereby enabled afterwards to bear, without injury, variations of heat and cold.

It is most beneficial when the child enjoys the free air in a place covered with grass and trees, at a little distance from one's habitation. The enjoyment of air in the streets of a city is far less wholesome.

III. Let the body of the child be washed daily with fresh cold water: a rule indispensably necessary for cleansing and invigorating the skin; for strengthening the whole nervous system; and for laying the foundation of a sound and long life.

This practice of washing ought to commence at the birth; but during the first week lukewarm water must be used; cold water ought to be employed afterwards, and it is of great importance that it be fresh drawn from a spring or running stream; for water contains fixed air which evaporates when it has stood any time, and which communicates to it a very strengthening quality. The child, however, must be washed speedily; and its body ought to be immediately rubbed and dried; for slow bathing cools, but speedy friction warms. Lastly, it should not be washed when it just comes from bed, nor, in general, while it perspires.

IV. Every week it ought to be bathed once or twice in tepid water, warmed to the temperature of new milk, or from 86° to 91° of Fahrenheit's thermometer.

This excellent practice unites in it such an extraordinary number of virtues, and is at the same time so suited to the age of infancy, that I may call it a real arcanum for bringing to perfection and forming the future man. Cleansing and invigorating the skin, free but not accelerated expansion of the powers and organs, uniform circulation, harmonious acting in concert of the whole (the



foundation of health), strengthening the nervous system, moderating the too great irritability of the vessels and too rapid vital consumption, purifying the juices, are all its effects; and I can, with confidence, assert that I am acquainted with no assistant means of physical education which possess in so high a degree, every requisite for laying the foundation of a long and healthful life. The bath must not consist entirely of boiled water, but of water fresh drawn from a well, to which some hot water, sufficient to bring it to a lukewarm temperature, has been added. In summer that water is best which has been warmed by the rays of the sun. The bathing should be continued, at this period of age, a quarter of an hour each time, and afterwards longer. It ought never to be used during the first hour after eating.

V. Be careful not to keep a child too warm: that is, avoid warm rooms, warm beds, and clothing. Keeping too warm increases irritability in a great degree, and gives occasion also to speedier vital consumption: it debilitates and relaxes the vessels, accelerates expansion, weakens and deadens the skin, disposes the body to continual perspiration, and thus renders it always liable to injury from cold. I consider it of great importance to accustom children to sleep from their infancy on mattresses made of horsehair, chaff, or moss. These never acquire too much heat; have more elasticity, and prevent too great tenderness. They oblige the child also, as they do not yield to pressure, to lie straight and extended; by which means they guard against overgrowth, and the premature excitement of their organic system.

VI. Let the clothing be wide, in no manner confined; and made of some substance not too warm to check perspiration, such as fur, but of stuff that can be often renewed or washed. Cotton is the best; and during the severity of winter, light woollen stuffs. Avoid all close bandages, stiff stays, small shoes; for these may give occasion to diseases which will afterwards shorten life. The head, from the fourth to the eighth week, must be

kept quite bare ; but this ought to be determined by the season of the year.

VII. Pay the utmost attention to cleanliness ; that is, change the shirt daily ; the clothing every week : the bed-clothes every month ; and remove every cause of noxious evaporation ; in particular, do not suffer too many people to be in the nursery ; and allow no clothes to be dried, or any foul linen to remain in it. Cleanliness for children is one-half of their life : the cleaner they are kept the more will they prosper and thrive. By cleanliness alone, with very moderate nourishment, they may in a short time be rendered strong, vigorous, and lively ; whereas, without cleanliness, even with the richest nourishment, they will continue sickly and weak. Want of attention to this precept is the cause why so many children pine away and are consumed without any visible reason. Ignorant people imagine that they must be bewitched, or under the influence of some evil spirit ; but dirt alone is the demon by which they are tormented, and which in the end will undoubtedly destroy them.

The *second period* is from the end of the second to the twelfth or fourteenth year ; and I here recommend the following precepts :—

I. Let the rules respecting cleanliness, washing with cold water, bathing, light clothing, and living in free air be observed according to the foregoing directions.

II. The food must not be too delicate and artificial, or too coarse. It will be best in this period to allow children a sufficient mixture of flesh and vegetables ; and to accustom them to everything, but neither to eat too much nor too often. People may rest assured that, if they put in practice all the other rules respecting physical education, bodily exercise, and cleanliness, neither delicate nor coarse food will be requisite to make a child healthy. For the truth of this observation we need only look at the children of rustics, who, without being fed according to medical precepts, are perfectly strong and sound. But one, indeed, ought not here, as is too often

the case, to give a child rustic fare, and at the same time to indulge it with a soft feather-bed, to confine it to the house, and accustom it to idleness; nor to employ the cold bath, while a child, in other respects, is overrated by most delicate treatment. I cannot repeat too often what I have before said, that a principal point of education is to preserve an uniform tone, and not to unite two opposite methods of management. It will be quite sufficient if a child, during this period, is allowed four meals every day. The only things which it ought not to touch are spices, coffee, chocolate, seasoning, confections, fat heavy puddings and cheese.\* For drink nothing is better than water. In such places only where Nature has denied pure spring water, I allow children to be accustomed to bear.

III. As bodily exercise now becomes an important part of physical education, let a child spend the greater part of the day in gymnastic sports of every kind, and in the open air, where they are always most serviceable. This strengthens in an incredible degree; gives peculiar activity to the body, uniform diffusion to the powers and juices; and guards, in the surest manner, against faults in the growth and formation.

IV. The powers of the mind must not be exerted too early. It is a great prejudice that people imagine they cannot make a child begin to learn too soon. But it is certain that a child may begin too soon, when that period is chosen during which Nature is still employed in forming the bodily powers and organs, and has need of all their strength for that purpose. This period extends to the seventh year; and if a child be obliged at an earlier age to apply to learning, and be confined in a sitting posture, its body will be deprived of the noblest part of its powers, which must be now wasted by the business of thinking;

\* I cannot conceive Hufeland's reasons for objecting to cheese, unless, perchance, it were less well made in the eighteenth than in the nineteenth century. I regard it as a wholesome article of diet for children, and a good compromise between meat and vegetable diet.  
—EDITOR.

and the consequences will be, a checking of the growth, imperfect formation of the limbs, muscular weakness, bad digestion, corrupt juices, the scrofula, and a preponderance of the nervous system in the whole machine, which will become burdensome during life, by nervous affections, the hypochondriasis, and evils of the like kind. Much, however, will here depend on the difference of constitution, and the greater or less vigour of mind; but I earnestly request that parents and others will in this respect pursue a method directly contrary to that usually followed. If a child show an early disposition for thinking and learning, one ought, instead of straining its powers the more, as is commonly the case, to prevent it from application till a later period; for such premature ripeness is generally a disease, at any rate an unnatural state, which ought rather to be checked than promoted, unless one wishes to breed up a *monster of erudition* rather than a sound healthful man.

I must here remark, that a great many of the evils which attend too early study, may not arise so much from exerting the powers of the mind, as from confinement and sitting, and from the corrupted air of schools in which children are taught. At any rate, the weakening is thus doubled. I am fully persuaded that it would be much less injurious if children were made to perform their school business in the open air during the fine seasons; and here, at the same time, would they have before them the book of Nature, which, supposing that the pupils are capable of reading and understanding it, is much more fit and proper for their first instruction than all the books that ever were written or printed.

## CHAPTER III.

## Active and laborious youth.

It appears that all those who attained to a great age were men who, in their youth, had been much accustomed to labour and fatigue; such as soldiers, sailors, and day-labourers. I shall here mention only *Mittelstädt*, that veteran of 112, who in his fifteenth year was a servant, and in his eighteenth a soldier; and who was present in all the Prussian wars, from the commencement of the monarchy.

A youth spent in that manner, becomes the foundation of a long and a strong life, two ways: partly by giving the body that degree of strength and solidity which is necessary for its duration; and partly by making that possible which principally contributes to promote happiness and longevity, advancement to a better and more agreeable situation. He who in his youth has every convenience and enjoyment in abundance hath nothing more to expect; he is deprived of the best means of exciting and preserving the vital power, hope, and the prospect of a better condition. If he be condemned then with increasing years to poverty and difficulties, he finds himself doubly oppressed; and the duration of his life must be necessarily shortened. But in the transition from a state of misery to one more fortunate, lies a continual source of new joy, new vigour, and new life. In the like manner, the passage, with increasing years, from a raw, cold climate, to one more mild, contributes much to prolong life; as also the change from a state of labour to one more convenient and agreeable.

## CHAPTER IV.

Abstinence from physical love in youth, and a too early assumption  
of the married state.

He who in Pleasure's downy arms  
Ne'er lost his health or youthful charms,  
A hero lives; and justly can  
Exclaim, "In me behold a man!"

He prospers like the slender reed  
Whose top waves gently o'er the mead;  
And moves, such blessings virtue follow,  
In health and beauty an Apollo.

That power divine, which him inspires,  
His breast with noblest passions fires;  
These heavenwards soar with eagle-flight,  
And spurn the cold, dark realms of night.

So full of majesty, a god,  
Shall earth alone be his abode?  
With dignity he steps, he stands,  
And nothing fears; for he commands.

Like drops drawn from the crystal stream,  
His eyes with pearly brilliance beam;  
With blushing signs of health o'erspread,  
His cheeks surpass the morning's red.

The fairest of the female train  
For him shall bloom, nor bloom in vain:  
O happy she whose lips he presses!  
O happy she whom he caresses!      BÜNGER.

THERE was a time when the German youth never thought of intimacy with the other sex till their twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth year; and yet nothing was then known of the pernicious consequences of this chastity, nor of many other imaginary evils of which people now dream: but these youths, increasing in strength as well as growth,

became men who, by their size, excited the astonishment even of the Romans.

People now leave off at the period when these began. They imagine they can never soon enough throw off their chastity; and young persons, long before their bodies are completely finished, begin to waste those powers which are destined for a higher use. The consequences are evident. These men become incomplete, half-formed beings; and at the period when our ancestors began to employ those powers, they, in them, are generally exhausted: they feel nothing but dejection and misery in their weakness; and a stimulus of the utmost importance for seasoning life is to them for ever lost.

It is incredible how far prejudice in this respect may be carried, especially when it flatters our inclination. I once knew a man who seriously believed that there was no poison more prejudicial to the human body than continence, and the consequence was, that he was an old man in his twentieth year, and in his twenty-fifth died of old age.

The present age has fallen so much into the taste of the times of chivalry, that all romances must now assume that form in order to please; and one, indeed, cannot help admiring the great, noble, and resolute manner of thinking and acting of these old Germans. It appears that the more sensible we are how far we have degenerated from them, the more we are excited by their example, and the more we are inflamed with a desire to imitate their conduct. But what a happiness would it be if we did not think merely of the object, but of the means to obtain it. That by which these people acquired so much courage, so great powers both of body and mind, their bold, firm, and resolute character, which made them *real men* in the utmost sense of the word, was, in particular, their strict continence. The youth of these men was destined to great exploits and undertakings, not to voluptuousness and dissipation; the physical propensity to love did not among them sink into mere animal enjoy.

ment; but was exalted to a moral incitement to noble and heroic actions. Each bore in his heart the image of his beloved object, whether real or imaginary; and this romantic love; this indissoluble attachment, was the shield of his continence and virtue, strengthened the powers of his body, and communicated to his mind courage and unalterable resolution, by continually directing its attention to his fair one smiling to him at a distance; and whose favour could be gained only by glorious achievements. However romantic these notions may be, I find, on closer examination, great wisdom in this use of physical love, one of the strongest motives by which human nature is actuated. How widely different has the case become among us! This propensity, which by prudent management may be made the germ of the most exalted virtue, of the greatest heroism, has degenerated into whining sensibility, or mere sensual gratification, which people enjoy prematurely, and even to satiety; the passion of love, which in those periods was a security against dissipation, is at present the source of the greatest; the virtue of chastity, the principal foundation without doubt of moral firmness and manliness of character, has become a subject of ridicule, and is decried as old-fashioned pedantry; and what ought to be the last and sweetest reward of toil, labour, and danger, has become a flower which every stripling crops by the way. Why does Nature excite in our bosom this sighing after union, this all-powerful, irresistible propensity to love? Not, truly, to afford subjects for romance, or to make a figure in the ecstatic raptures of poetry; but that it may serve as an indissoluble band to unite two hearts: to lay the grounds for a happy generation; and that, by this magic tie, our existence may be connected with the first and the most sacred of all duties. How fortunate would it be were we here to imitate the ancient method, and never to pull the fruit till we had planted!

At present, we hear a great deal of strength and strong men: but I will believe nothing of it as long as I see that



they have not strength enough to subdue their passions; for, that is the only cause of triumph, as well as the only sign of mental strength; and chastity is the school in which youth ought to be exercised, and to form themselves for becoming strong men.

We in general find, in the old world, that all those from whom anything great or glorious was expected, were obliged to restrain physical love. So much were people then convinced that Venus absorbs the whole powers of man, and that those given up to dissipation could never attain an exalted position.

## CHAPTER V.

**Happy married state.**

It is one of the falsest and most pernicious of prejudices, that marriage is an invention merely political and conventional. It is much rather one of the most essential parts of the destination of man, both for the individual and the whole; and an establishment absolutely necessary for the education of mankind. By marriage I understand, a firm, sacred union of two persons, for the purpose of mutual support, and for giving origin to and educating children. And, in this intimate union, founded on so important an object, lies, in my opinion, the principal grounds of domestic as well as public felicity; since, in the first place, it is indispensably requisite for the moral perfection of mankind. By this close connexion of two beings, this association of one's interest with that of another, is selfishness, the most dangerous enemy of all virtue, best subdued; and man always more inclined to humanity and compassion for his fellow-creatures, and still brought nearer to his true state of moral exaltation. His wife and his children form an indissoluble bond, which unites him to the rest of mankind, and to the good of the whole: his heart is always warmed by the sweet sensation of matrimonial and parental tenderness, and defended from that deadening coldness which so easily overcomes the man who leads a solitary life; and the endearing cares of a father impose on him duties which accustom him to order, industry, and habits of prudence. His passion for the sex is thereby ennobled, and, from a mere animal instinct, converted into one of the highest moral motives of action

and violent passions, ill-humour, and bad customs, are thus best eradicated. Hence arises a very fortunate influence over the whole and the general good; so that I can, with perfect confidence, affirm, that happy marriages are the most important supports of a state, and of public peace and felicity. A bachelor always remains a mere egotist; restless and unsteady, a prey to selfish humours and passions; less interested for mankind, for his country and the state, than for himself. He is overcome by a false sentiment of liberty, which prevents him from entering into wedlock; and this sentiment is still nourished and strengthened by the condition in which he lives. What can tend more to produce a fondness for change, sedition, and revolutions, than an increase of unmarried citizens? How different is the case with the married! That dependance on the other half, necessary in marriage, accustoms us continually to a dependance on the laws; regard for one's wife and children obliges one to be regular and industrious: by his children, a man is attached closely to the state; its interest and prosperity by these means become his own; or, as Bacon expresses it, he who is married and has children, has given pledges to the state: he is a bondsman, a true citizen, and a real patriot. But, what is still more, a foundation is here laid, not only for the happiness of the present generation, but for that of the future also; as it is the matrimonial union only that produces to the state good moral citizens, accustomed from their youth to regularity and an observance of their duty. One must not imagine that the state itself can supply this formation of the manners, this education which all-wise Nature hath connected with the hearts of a father and a mother.

I shall now return to my principal object, to point out the beneficial influence which marriage has on the physical good of mankind. With the utmost propriety may it be classed among those means which tend to prolong life; and my reasons are as follow:—

1<sup>st</sup>. Marriage is the only means to regulate love, and to direct it to its proper object. It equally prevents dissipa-

tion, and cold and unnatural indifference. However much I have recommended continence in youth, convinced that it is indispensably necessary to promote long life, I am convinced also that there are certain years of manhood when it is as prejudicial to suppress by violence the propensities of nature, as it is to yield to them before the proper period. It is required by the general law of harmony. No power in us must remain totally unexpanded; each must be exercised in moderation.

2nd. We are told by experience, that *all those who attained to a very remarkable age were married.*

3rd. The married state promotes *domestic* joy, which is the purest, the most uniform, and the least wasting of all. It is undoubtedly that which is best suited to physical as well as moral health, and which can, with the greatest certainty, preserve the mind in that happy mean state most favourable to longevity. It tends to moderate overstrained hope and enthusiastic speculation, as well as excessive care. Everything, by the participation of another being, by the intimate connexion of our existence with that of another, is rendered milder and more supportable. To this may be added, that tender charge, that heaven on earth, secured by nothing so much as wedded love, which lies in the possession of healthful and well-educated children; that actual renovation, reserved for us by their company, of which Cornaro, at the age of eighty, has given so affecting a picture.

We go out of the world by the same changes almost as those by which we enter it. We begin as children; as children we leave off. We return, at last, to the same weak and helpless condition as our first. We must have people to lift us, to carry us, to provide us nourishment, and even to feed us. We again have need of parents. And how wise the establishment! We find them again in our children, who now take delight in repaying a part of that kindness which we showed to them. Children now step, as it were, into the place of parents, while our weakness transposes us into the place of children. The

venerable oak, on the other hand, does not enjoy the benefit of such a wise regulation. The old decayed trunk stands alone and forgotten, and in vain endeavours to procure from foreign aid that support and assistance which can be the work only of natural affection and the bonds of nature.

Do what thou canst, exert thy utmost power ;  
Yet still alone thou'lt stand till thy last hour,  
When Nature's hand, almighty and divine,  
To the grand whole thy lifeless mass shall join.

SCHILLER.

## CHAPTER VI.

### Sleep.

I HAVE already shown that sleep is one of the wisest regulations of Nature, to check and moderate, at fixed periods, the incessant and impetuous stream of vital consumption. It forms, as it were, stations for our physical and moral existence; and we thereby obtain the happiness of being daily re-born, and of passing every morning, through a state of annihilation, into a new and refreshed life. Without this continual change, this incessant renovation, how wretched and insipid would not life be; and how depressed our mental as well as physical sensation! The greatest philosopher of the present age says, therefore, with justice: *Take from man hope and sleep* and he will be the most wretched being on earth.

How unwisely then do those act who imagine that by taking as little sleep as possible they prolong their existence. They will obtain their end neither in *intensive* nor *extensive* life. They will, indeed, spend more hours with their eyes open; but they will never enjoy life in the proper sense of the word, nor that freshness and energy of mind which are the certain consequences of sound and sufficient sleep, and which stamp a like character on all our undertakings and actions.

But sufficient sleep is necessary, not only for intensive life, but also for extensive, in regard to its support and duration. Nothing accelerates consumption so much, nothing wastes us so much before the time, and renders us old, as a want of it. The physical effects of sleep are, that it retards all the vital movements, collects the vital

power, and restores what has been lost in the course of the day; and that it separates from us what is useless and pernicious. It is, as it were, a daily crisis, during which all secretions are performed in the greatest tranquillity, and with the utmost perfection.

Continued watching unites all the properties destructive of life; incessant wasting of the vital power and of the organs, acceleration of consumption, and prevention of restoration.

We must not, however, on this account, believe that too long continued sleep is one of the best means for preserving life. Long sleep accumulates too great an abundance of pernicious juices, makes the organs too flaccid and unfit for use, and in this manner can shorten life also.

In a word, no one should sleep less than six, nor more than eight hours. This may be established as a general rule.

To those who wish to enjoy sound peaceful repose, and to obtain the whole end of sleep, I recommend the following observations:—

1st. The place where one sleeps must be quiet and obscure. The less our senses are acted upon by external impressions, the more perfectly can the soul rest. One may from this see how improper the custom is of having a candle burning in one's bed-chamber during the night.

2nd. People ought always to reflect, that their bed-chamber is a place in which they pass a great part of their lives; at least they do not remain in any place so long in the same situation. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that this place should contain pure sound air. A sleeping apartment must, consequently, be roomy and high; neither inhabited nor heated during the day; and the windows ought always to be kept open, except in the night-time.

3rd. One should eat little, and only cold food for supper, and always some hours before going to bed.

4th. When abed, one should lie not in a forced or constrained posture, but almost horizontal, the headless

cepted, which ought to be a little raised. Nothing is more prejudicial than to lie in bed half-sitting. The body then forms an angle; circulation in the stomach is checked, and the spine is always very much compressed. By this custom one of the principal ends of sleep, a free and uninterrupted circulation of the blood, is defeated; and, in infancy and youth, deformity and crookedness are often its consequences.

5th. All the cares and burden of the day must be laid aside with one's clothes; none of them must be carried to bed with us; and, in this respect, one by custom may obtain very great power over the thoughts. I am acquainted with no practice more destructive than that of studying in bed, and of reading till one falls asleep. By these means the soul is put into too great activity, at a period when everything conspires to allow it perfect rest; and it is natural that the ideas, thus excited, should wander and float through the brain during the whole night. It is not enough to sleep physically; man must sleep also spiritually. Such a disturbed sleep is as insufficient as its opposite,—that is, when our spiritual part sleeps, but not our corporeal; such, for example, as sleep in a jolting carriage on a journey.

6th. One circumstance, in particular, I must not here omit to mention. Many believe that it is entirely the same if one sleeps these seven hours either in the day or the night time. People give themselves up, therefore, at night, as long as they think proper, either to study or pleasure; and imagine that they make everything even when they sleep in the forenoon those hours which they sat up after midnight. But I must request every one, who regards his health, to beware of so seducing an error. It is certainly not the same, whether one sleeps seven hours by day or by night; and two hours sound sleep before midnight are of more benefit to the body than four hours in the day. My reasons are as follow:—

1. That period of twenty-four hours, formed by the regular revolution of our earth, in which all its inhabitants par-



take, is particularly distinguished in the physical economy of man. This regular period is apparent in all diseases; and all the other small periods, so wonderful in our physical history, are by it in reality determined. It is, as it were, the unity of our natural chronology. Now, it is observed, that the more the end of these periods coincides with the conclusion of the day, the more is the pulsation accelerated: and a feverish state is produced, or the so called evening fever, to which every man is subject. The accession of new chyle to the blood, may, in all probability, contribute something towards this fever, though it is not the only cause; for we find it in sick people who have neither eat nor drunk. It is more owing, without doubt, to the absence of the sun, and to that revolution in the atmosphere which is connected with it. This evening fever is the reason why nervous people find themselves more fit for labour at night than during the day. To become active, they must first have an artificial stimulus; and the evening fever supplies the place of wine. But, one may easily perceive that this is an unnatural state; and the consequences are the same as those of every simple fever: lassitude, sleep, and a crisis, by the perspiration which takes place during that sleep. It may with propriety therefore be said, that all men every night have a critical perspiration, more perceptible in some, and less so in others, by which whatever useless or pernicious particles have been imbibed by our bodies, or created in them, during the day, are secreted and removed. This daily crisis, necessary to every man, is particularly requisite for his support; and the proper period of it is when the fever has attained to its highest degree, that is, the period when the sun is in the nadir, consequently midnight. What do those, then, who disobey this voice of Nature which calls for rest at the above period, and who employ this fever, which should be the means of secreting and purifying our juices to enable them to increase their activity and exertion? By neglecting the critical period, they destroy the whole crisis of so much

importance; and, though they go to bed towards morning, cannot certainly obtain, on that account, the full benefit of sleep, as the critical period is past. They will never have a perfect, but an imperfect crisis; and what that means is well known to physicians. Their bodies also will never be completely purified. How clearly is this proved by the infirmities, rheumatic pains, and swollen feet, the unavoidable consequences of such lucubration.

Besides, the eyes suffer more by this custom; for one labours then the whole summer through with candle-light, which is not necessary for those who employ the morning.

And, lastly, those who spend the night in labour, and the morning in sleep, lose that time which is the most beautiful and the best fitted for labour. After every sleep we are renovated in the properest sense of the word; we are, in the morning, always taller than at night; we have then more pliability, powers and juices; in a word, more of the characteristics of youth; while, at night, our bodies are drier and more exhausted, and the properties of old age then prevail. One, therefore, may consider each day as a sketch, in miniature, of human life, in which the morning represents youth; noon, manhood; and evening, old age. Who would not then employ the youthful part of each day for labour, rather than begin his work in the evening, the period of old age and debility? In the morning, all nature appears freshest and most engaging; the mind at that period is also clearest, and possesses most strength and energy. It is not, as at night, worn out, and rendered unequal, by the multifarious impressions of the day, by business and fatigue: it is then more original, and possesses its natural powers. This is the period of new mental creation, of clear conceptions and exalted ideas. Never does man enjoy the sensation of his own existence so purely and in so great perfection as in a beautiful morning. He who neglects this period, neglects the youth of his life.

All those who attained to a great age were fond of

early rising; and *John Wesley*, the founder of the Methodists, an original and singular man, was so convinced of the necessity of this custom, that he made it a point of religion to get up early, and by these means lived to the age of eighty-eight. His motto, which as a true maxim of life I shall here recommend, was :

To go early to bed, and early to rise,  
Will make a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.

## CHAPTER VII. .

## Bodily exercise.

"WHEN I consider the physical structure of man," said the great *Frederick*, "it appears to me as if Nature had formed us rather to be postillions than sedentary men of letters." And, without doubt, though this expression be strong, it contains a great deal of truth. Man is, and always remains, a middle being, that incessantly fluctuates between the brute and the angel; and as much as he would deviate from his higher destination, did he continue the mere animal, as much does he offend against his present destination when he wishes to be merely spirit—to think only and to perceive. He must exercise his animal and spiritual powers in the like degree, if he be desirous to accomplish perfectly the object for which he was created; and this, in regard to the duration of life, is of the utmost importance. Harmony in the movements is the grand foundation on which health, uniformity of restoration, and the duration of the body, depend; and these certainly cannot take place if we merely sit and think. The propensity to bodily movement is, in man, as great as the propensity to eating and drinking. Let us only look at a child. Sitting still is to it the greatest punishment. And the faculty of sitting the whole day, and not feeling the least desire for moving, is certainly an unnatural and diseased state. We are taught by experience, that those men attained to the greatest age, who accustomed themselves to strong and incessant exercise in the open air.

I consider it, therefore, as an indispensable law of longevity, that one should exercise, at least, an hour

every day, in the open air. The most healthful time is before meals, or from three to four hours after.

In this respect, besides small journeys, and excursions on horseback, moderate dancing, and other gymnastic exercises are of great service : and it is much to be wished that we here paid more attention to imitate the ancients, who managed scientifically this promoter of health, and suffered no external circumstances to prevent them from using it. It is of most benefit when not merely the body, but the soul also, is exercised and kept awake at the same time. A walk, therefore, to answer fully its object, must be directed to a quarter where the prospects are always agreeable, and to a certain term or spot.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The enjoyment of free air. Moderate temperature of warmth.

THE enjoyment of free air may be considered as a nourishment equally necessary for our existence as eating and drinking. Pure air is certainly the greatest means of strengthening and supporting life; while confined and corrupted air is its most subtle and deadly poison.

From this may be deduced the following practical rules:—

1st. Suffer no day to pass without enjoying the pure open air beyond the boundaries of a town or city. Consider your walk not merely as the means of exercise, but, in a particular manner, as the enjoyment of the purest vital nourishment, which is indispensably necessary above all to those who are much confined to their apartments. Besides this advantage, one obtains that also of making one's self, by such daily enjoyment of air, acquainted and familiar with a free atmosphere; and people are thus secured against one of the greatest evils that usually afflict mankind, I mean *too much sensibility in regard to all impressions and variations of the weather*. This is one of the most abundant sources of disease; and there is no other method of counteracting it, but to harden one's self by daily exposure to the open air.

Lastly. By this custom one will obtain infinite advantage in regard to the eyes; for it is certain that a great cause of weak eyes and short-sightedness are the four walls within which we are accustomed to live from our infancy, and by which the eyes at length lose their whole power of seeing remote objects distinctly. The best proof of this

is, that such weakness of the eyes is to be found only in cities, and not in the country.

2nd. One should endeavour, wherever it is possible, to live high. Those who have a regard for their health, at least in cities, ought not to inhabit the ground-floor. Let the windows be opened daily. Ventilators, or chimneys, are the best means for purifying the foul atmosphere of confined apartments. People ought not to sleep in rooms which have been inhabited the whole day; and the windows of bed-chambers should be always kept open in the day-time.

I must here add one remark of the utmost importance for the prolongation of life. The air in which one lives should be kept in a moderate degree of temperature. It is much better to live in air too cool than too hot; for heat accelerates, in an extraordinary degree, the stream of vital consumption, as is proved by the shorter lives of those who inhabit warm countries; and many people create artificially such a climate by means of their hot apartments. The temperature of the air in an apartment should never exceed 66° of Fahrenheit's thermometer.

## CHAPTER IX.

## Rural and country life.

FORTUNATE are they to whose lot it has fallen to remain near and true to their parent Earth; and to find their happiness, labour, and destination in immediate intercourse with Nature. They reside at the real source of eternal youth, health, and felicity; both body and soul enjoy there the utmost harmony and well-being. Simplicity, cheerfulness, innocence, and contentment, accompany them through life; and they attain to the utmost term which it is capable of reaching with its present organization. I cannot refrain, therefore, from inserting here what Herder has said on this subject:

The resolution of my friend to change  
 His walled prison for a rural seat  
 I much applaud—why should we foolishly  
 Pile up in lofty towers the hard hewn rock?  
 To fright us with their sudden fall, or hide  
 From our dark eyes the cheering face of heaven!  
 Not so in former days lived the young world,  
 In innocence and peace; free from such folly,  
 'Midst rural scenes—there harmless mirth prevails,  
 And fills the breast with never-ceasing joy:  
 There we behold the wide-expanded heaven;  
 No neighbour robs us of the light of day;  
 And from the clear fresh spring Apollo bids us  
 Assuage our thirst with his own liquor.  
 O did but men know what is happiness!  
 Our mother Nature ne'er within dark cities,  
 Or gloomy walls and castles, it confined.  
 It on the plain blooms equally for all.



Those find it oft who seek it not; and he  
 Who spurns base ore will it enjoy—his treasure  
 Is what the earth presents—in the bright stream.  
 He sees his silver; and his gold shops up  
 In yellow corn, or smiles from fruitful trees.  
 He hears his concert in the shady grove;  
 And there his chorus, free at will to range,  
 Joins in the mirthful or the pensive strain.  
 Far otherwise within the town confined:  
 The captive songster in its cage complains!  
 The slave who feeds it thinks it sings alone  
 To please its master; but with every note  
 It bids its tyrant give it liberty—  
 Nature delights in rural scenes: and Art,  
 Her imitator, there must follow her  
 With timid steps. Of foliage ever green  
 Behold yon palace, arched with thick woven boughs!  
 Where thou mayst sit, like Persia's boasted lord  
 In halls of cedar—and 'midst peace enjoy,  
 What he ne'er knows, sound, sweet, refreshing sleep.  
 Great cities are great plagues! There native joy  
 Flies from man's breast, and makes him pleasure seek  
 In Art alone—there every thing by paint  
 Is seen disguised—the countenance and walls—  
 Each action, word, and even the very heart—  
 All there consists of costly wood or stone;  
 And even the owners seem as hard as these.  
 O rural life, 'midst poverty how rich!  
 When hunger bids, there thou mayst nobly feast  
 On what each season for thy use brings forth,  
 In rich variety. The plough thy table;  
 And a green leaf, by way of dish, supports  
 Thy meal of fruit. A homely wooden jug  
 Draws up refreshing drink from the pure stream,  
 Which, free from poison, pours out health alone,  
 And with soft murmur thee to sleep invites:  
 While, in the air, the lark high-soaring sings—  
 Now mounting up, again descending low—  
 Until, at length, it drops into its nest,  
 Just at thy foot, between two furrows placed.

If one, indeed, be desirous of sketching out, according to theoretical principles, the idea of a life conducive to health and longevity, one must recur to that presented to us by a country life. Nowhere are all the requisites for that purpose so perfectly united as here; and nowhere does everything in and around mankind labour so powerfully to promote health and longevity. The enjoyment of pure, sound air; simple and frugal food; daily and strong exercise without doors; established regularity in all the vital operations; the beautiful prospect of simple Nature; and a frame of internal peace, cheerfulness, and serenity, which by these means are diffused throughout the mind—what sources of vital restoration! Besides, a country life is, in a particular manner, capable of giving that disposition which is contrary to the passionate, overstrained, and eccentric; and the more so as it removes us from the dissipation, corruption, and worthlessness of the town, which tend always to nourish the passions. It consequently preserves, both internally and externally, peace of mind and equanimity, which are such great supports to life. It inspires us with cheerfulness and hope, and increases our enjoyments in general, but without violence or passion, and moderated by the softest tone of Nature. It needs excite no wonder, then, that, according to experience, instances of the greatest age are to be found in rural life only.

It is a melancholy reflection, that this kind of life, the earliest and most natural state of man, should at present be so little esteemed that the fortunate farmer even quits it till his son becomes a studious rake; and the proportion between countrymen and citizens seems daily to be diminished. It certainly would be much better for the happiness of individuals, as well as of the whole, if the greater part of the penknives and scissors now in use were converted into ploughshares, and that those hands occupied in scribbling were employed with the plough and the spade. The former, to many, is indeed only labour of the hands; but the latter is the most useful, and, if I am not much mistaken, we shall be at length obliged, from political con-

siderations, to recur to it once more. Man must again approach nearer to his parent Earth, from which he has so far removed in every point of view.

All, indeed, cannot be farmers by profession; but how beneficial would it be if men of letters, people of business, and those who labour with their heads, would divide their time between both kinds of employment; and imitate the ancients, who, notwithstanding their philosophical or political engagements, did not think it beneath their dignity to devote their spare hours to agriculture, and to rusticate in the proper sense of the word! All the melancholy consequences of a sedentary life, and overstraining the mental faculties, would disappear, if people, some hours every day, or a few months in the year, would take hold of a spade or a mattock and cultivate their field or their garden; for the usual method of living in the country, (which in general means nothing else than to carry along with one care and books, and to read, think, or write in the open air, instead of a chamber,) cannot accomplish that object. Such rustication will again restore the equilibrium between the mind and the body, which the writing-desk so often destroys. By an union of these three grand panaceas, exercise, free air, and exhilarating the spirits, a renovation and restoration may be annually effected, which will be of incredible service to vital duration and happiness. Nay I do not think I say too much when I promise, from this practice, besides physical advantages, many of a spiritual and moral nature also. Cobwebs of the brain and hypotheses of the closet will certainly be less abundant; people will not so often imagine the whole world to be contained in their persons, or within the four walls of their studies, and treat it in that point of view; and the mind will acquire a greater propensity to truth, more soundness, more warmth, and a more natural manner of thinking, properties which distinguish the Greek and Roman philosophers so much, and for which, in my opinion, they were indebted principally to their continual intercourse with Nature. One ought therefore to be exceed-

ingly careful never to suffer a *taste* for *Nature* to be extinguished in the mind. This taste may be easily destroyed, by always living recluse, by incessant application to business, and by abstract speculations in the closet; and when it is once lost, the most beautiful rural scenes will have no effect upon us; and one, in the most delightful districts, and under the serenest sky, may remain in a state of living death. This may be best guarded against by not removing too long or too far from Nature; by quitting, as often as one can, the artificial and abstract world; by opening all the senses to the beneficent influences of Nature; and if one from the earliest youth endeavours to acquire a taste for the study of Natural History (a point which ought to be attended to in education), and to warm the imagination for it by the beautiful imitations of painting, and the heart-exalting descriptions of the poets of Nature, such as a Zachariä, Thomson, Gesner, Matthison, &c.

## CHAPTER X.

## Travelling.

I CANNOT possibly omit to devote here a particular place to this enjoyment, and to recommend it as a means of prolonging life. The continual motion, variety of scene, exhilaration of the mind, and the use of free and changed air, have a magical effect upon mankind, and contribute in an incredible degree to renovate and revive the whole frame. Vital consumption may indeed be thereby somewhat increased; but this is amply counterbalanced by the increased restoration which is effected, partly in regard to the body, by digestion being strengthened and invigorated, and partly in regard to the mind, by a succession of agreeable impressions, and the forgetfulness of one's self. This help, therefore, I recommend to those whose employment condemns them to a sedentary life, who are continually engaged in abstract studies or oppressive labour, whose minds have sunk into a state of insensibility, melancholy or hypochondriasis, or, what is worst of all, are strangers to domestic felicity.

But as many employ it in such a manner that it produces no effect, it perhaps may be of some service to communicate here a few of the most important rules how people must travel in order to benefit their health and their life.

1st. Travelling on foot, or rather on horseback, is the most healthful, and best calculated to answer the end proposed; but when one is weakly, or undertakes long excursions, it is more advisable to travel in a carriage.

2nd. When one travels in a carriage, it is very beneficial always to change the posture; that is, to sit some-

times, and sometimes to recline. By these means one can best prevent the evils attending continued riding in this manner, which are occasioned principally by the jolting being in one direction.

3rd. Nature will not suffer any sudden transitions. It is therefore improper for people accustomed to a sedentary life to undertake suddenly a journey during which they will be exposed to violent jolting. The case here is the same as if one accustomed to drink water should all at once begin to drink wine. Let the transition be slow, and begin with moderate motion.

4th. Excursions, the object of which is health and the prolongation of life, must not be fatiguing; but this can be determined only by difference of temperament and constitution. Ten or twelve miles daily, with a rest every three or four days, may perhaps be the best standard. One ought, above all things, to avoid travelling in the night-time; which, by interrupting the necessary refreshment, checking perspiration, and exposing the body to unhealthful air, is always prejudicial. By respecting nocturnal rest, one may accomplish twice as much in the day.

5th. People must not imagine that they may indulge a little more in intemperance when on a journey. One, however, needs not to be too nice in the choice of food and drink; and it is always best to use the common fare of each country. But at any rate the stomach ought not to be overloaded. By the motion of travelling, the power of the body is too much divided for the stomach to admit of a large quantity of food; and the motion itself, by these means, will become more fatiguing. People, in particular, should not indulge too much in heating food and liquors, as is often the case on journeys; for travelling alone acts as a stimulus, and less stimulating nourishment is then required than in a state of rest. A want of attention to this rule may occasion too violent irritation, inflammation, accumulations of the blood, &c. It is most proper, on journeys, to eat rather little at a time, but

often; to drink more than one eats; and to choose food easy of digestion, yet strongly nutritive, not of a heating nature, and such as cannot be readily adulterated. It is safest, therefore, in the country, and in small inns, to use milk, eggs, well-baked bread, boiled or roasted meat, and fruit. I advise travellers, above all, to be on their guard against the wine kept in such houses. It will be much better to drink water, with the addition of a little lemon-juice, or of some good liquor which they may carry along with them. If the water be impure, it may be rendered sweet by charcoal powder.\*

6th. Avoid immoderate exertion and wasting of the powers. It is, however, as difficult in general to lay down a proper standard of motion, as of eating and drinking. But Nature, in this, has given us a very excellent guide, a sense of lassitude, which is here of as much importance as the sense of satiety in eating or drinking. Weariness is nothing else than the voice of Nature, which tells us that our stock of powers is exhausted, and that he who is tired should enjoy repose. But Nature may, indeed, become lost in habit; and we may be as insensible of lassitude as the continual glutton is of fulness, especially when the nerves are overstrained by stimulating and heating food and drink. There are then, however, other signs to tell us that we have exceeded the proper measure; and I request that to these the strictest attention may be paid. When one begins to be low-spirited or dejected; to yawn

\* This is one of the greatest and most beneficial discoveries of modern times, for which we are indebted to Mr. Lowiz of Petersburg. Water which has a disagreeable odour, or has become putrid, may almost immediately be freed from its nauseous taste, as well as its bad smell, and be converted into good drinkable liquor, by the following process:—Take some burnt charcoal, and reduce it to a fine powder. Mix about a tablespoonful of this powder in a pint of water, stir it well round, and suffer it to stand for a few minutes. Let it then run slowly through filtering paper into a glass, and it will be found quite transparent, without any bad taste or smell, and perfectly pure for drinking. People may preserve the charcoal powder a long time in a small bottle well corked, and carry it with them when they travel.

often, and be drowsy, yet at the same time to be incapable of sleeping though one enjoys rest; when the appetite is lost; when the smallest movement occasions a fluttering of the pulse, heat, and even trembling; when the mouth becomes dry, and is sensible of a bitter taste, it is high time to seek refreshment and repose, if one wishes to prevent illness already beginning to take place.

7th. While one is travelling, insensible perspiration may easily be checked; and cold is the principal source of those diseases which thence arise. It is advisable, therefore, to guard against all sudden transitions from heat to cold, or the contrary; and those who have great sensibility in the skin, will do well, when they go on a journey, to carry a thin flannel shirt along with them.

8th. Cleanliness, when one travels, is doubly necessary; and, therefore, to wash the body frequently with cold water is much to be recommended. This will contribute also, in a great degree, to remove lassitude.

9th. During winter, or in a cold climate, one may always submit to greater exercise than during summer, or in warm climates, where perspiration exhausts one half of the strength. One, also, can undergo more fatigue early in the morning than in the afternoon.

10th. Full-blooded persons, or those who are subject to a spitting of blood, or other serious disease, must consult their physician before they undertake a journey.



## CHAPTER XI.

Cleanliness, and care of the skin.

**BOTH** these I consider as important means for the prolongation of life. Cleanliness removes everything that Nature has secreted from us, as useless or corrupted; as well as everything prejudicial, that might be conveyed to us, from without, through the superficies of our bodies.

Care of the skin is an essential part of cleanliness, and consists in paying such attention to it from infancy, that it may be kept in a lively, active, and useful condition.

The skin, indeed, must not be considered merely as a common covering to defend us from the sun and the rain, but as one of the most important organs of our body, without the incessant activity and agency of which there can be neither health nor long life; and in the neglect of which, in modern times, lies the secret source of numberless diseases and evils that tend to shorten our existence. May the following observations, therefore, make more impression on my readers, and excite more attention to this organ and the management of it!

The skin is the, greatest medium for purifying our bodies; and every moment a multitude of useless, corrupted, and worn-out particles evaporate through its numberless small vessels, in an insensible manner. This secretion is inseparably connected with life, and the circulation of our blood; and by it the greater part of all the impurity of our bodies is removed. If the skin, therefore, be flabby or inactive, and if its pores be stopped up, an acridity and corruption of our juices will be the unavoidable consequence, and the most dangerous diseases may ensue.

: Besides, the skin is the seat of *feeling*, the most general of all our senses, or that which in an essential manner connects us with surrounding Nature, and in particular with the atmosphere; and by the state of which, in a great measure, the sensation of our own existence, and the relation which we bear to everything around us, is determined. Hence a greater or less sensibility, in regard to disease, depends very much on the skin; and those whose skin is weak or relaxed have generally a sensation too delicate and unnatural, by which means it happens that they are internally affected in a manner highly disagreeable, by every small variation in the weather, every change of the atmosphere, and at length become real barometers. Such a constitution is called the rheumatic, and arises chiefly from a want of strength in the skin. It occasions a tendency to perspiration, which is also an unnatural state, and which exposes us continually to colds and other disorders.

It is, likewise, a grand means for preserving an equilibrium in the powers and motion of our bodies. The more active and open the skin is, the more secure will people be against obstructions, and diseases of the lungs, intestines and lower stomach; and the less tendency will they have to *gastric* (bilious) *fevers*, *hypochondriasis*, *gout*, *asthma*, *catarrh* and *varicose veins*. One great cause of these disorders being at present so common amongst us, is, that we no longer endeavour to cleanse and strengthen the skin by bathing and other means.

The skin, moreover, is one of the most important means of restoration of our bodies, by which a multitude of fine spiritual component parts are conveyed to us from the atmosphere. Without a sound skin there can be no complete restoration, which is one of the chief principles of long life.

. It ought also not to be forgotten, that the skin is the grand organ of crises, that is to say, the assistant of Nature in disease; and that a man with open pores, and a skin sufficiently vigorous, may depend on being cured

much more easily and with more certainty, and often even without the use of medicine.

That such an organ must be a great support of health and life, no one will deny; and it is therefore incomprehensible how people in modern times, since mankind have become more enlightened, should neglect it so much. Nay, we in general find, that, instead of paying the least attention to it, they from their infancy do everything in their power, as it were, to relax and to weaken it, and to stop up its pores. The most of mankind, except at baptism, never experience the benefit of bathing during their whole lives; the skin by dirt and daily perspiration is more and more stopped up; weakened and relaxed by warm clothing, furs, feather-beds, &c.; rendered inactive by confined air, and a sedentary life; and I think I may, without exaggeration, assert, that, among the greater part of men, the pores of the skin are half-closed and unfit for use.

Let me here be permitted to call the attention of my readers to an incongruity, which is not the only one of the kind in human life. The most ignorant person is convinced that proper care of the skin is indispensably necessary for the existence and well-being of horses and various animals. The groom often denies himself sleep, and other gratifications, that he may curry and dress his horses sufficiently. If they become meagre and weak, the first reflection is, whether there may not have been some neglect or want of care in regard to combing them. Such a simple idea, however, never occurs to him in respect to his child. If it grow feeble and sickly; if it pine away and is afflicted with disease, the consequence of dirt, he thinks rather of witchcraft and other absurdities than of the real cause, neglecting to keep the skin pure and clean. Since we show so much prudence and intelligence in regard to animals, why not in regard to men?

The rules which I have to propose for preserving cleanliness and a sound state of the skin, are remarkably easy and simple; and, if observed from youth, may be considered as very powerful means for the prolongation of life.

1st. Remove carefully everything that the body has secreted as corrupted or prejudicial. This may be done by changing the linen often, daily if it be possible, and also the bed-clothes, or at least the sheets; by using, instead of a feather-bed, a mattress, which attracts less dirt; and by continually renewing the air in apartments, and particularly in one's bedchamber.

2nd. Let the whole body be washed daily with cold water, and rub the skin strongly at the same time, by which means it will acquire a great deal of life and vigour.

3rd. One ought to bathe once a week, the whole year through, in tepid water; and it will be of considerable service to add to it three or four ounces of soap. It is much to be wished that public baths were again erected, that poor people might enjoy this benefit, and thereby be rendered strong and sound, as was the case some centuries ago.\*

I cannot quit this subject without mentioning sea-bathing, which, on account of its stimulative and penetrating power, may be placed at the head of those means that regard the care of the skin; and which certainly supplies one of the first wants of the present generation, by opening the pores, and thereby reinvigorating the whole

\* Traces of this laudable practice may still everywhere be seen in the remains of baths and bathing-houses; but the use of it has been abandoned through the inconceivable indolence of mankind. Every Sunday evening, people formerly went in procession through the streets, beating on basins, to remind the lower classes of bathing; and the tradesman, who laboured at dirty work, washed off, in the bath, that dirt which now adheres to him perhaps during his whole life. In every place of any consequence there should be a bathing-house, or a floating bath on some river for the summer, and another for the winter. In bathing it ought to be a rule never to enter the water with a full stomach, but either fasting or four hours after eating; never to bathe when the body is hot; to remain in cold water not more than a quarter of an hour, and in warm water never more than three quarters; to be cautious of catching cold when one comes out, which may be best done by putting on a flannel gown; and during dry warm weather, to take moderate exercise afterwards; but in cold, moist weather, to remain for an hour in a warm apartment.

nervous system. This bathing is attended with two important advantages. The first is, that besides its great healing power, in cases of disease, it may be employed by those who are perfectly well, as the means most agreeable to Nature for strengthening and preserving health; which is not the case with a great many other kinds of bathing, that are injurious to a healthy person. In this respect it may be compared to bodily exercise, which can remove diseases otherwise incurable—and which may be used also by those who are sound, in order to preserve themselves in that state. The other advantage is the noble, grand, and indescribable prospect of the sea connected with it; and which, on those not acquainted with it, has an effect capable of bracing up the nervous system, and producing a beneficial exaltation of the whole frame. I am fully convinced that the physical effects of sea-bathing must be greatly increased by this impression on the mind; and that a hypochondriac or nervous person may be half cured by residing on the sea-coast, and enjoying a view of the grand scenes of Nature which will there present themselves: such as the rising and setting of the sun over the blue expanse of the waters, the awful majesty of the waves during a storm, &c. For the like purpose, therefore, I would advise an inhabitant of the inland parts to take a journey to the sea; and an inhabitant of the coast to make an excursion to the Alps; for both, in my opinion, are the sublimest productions of Nature. The thanks of the public are undoubtedly due to that exalted prince, so much a friend to mankind, who erected the first sea-bath in Germany, at Dobrahn, near Rostock; and to that worthy physician Vogel, who formed the plan of it in a manner so excellent and so likely to make it answer the intended purpose, and who assists its salutary effects by his presence and advice.

4th. People should wear warm clothing that does not tend to weaken the skin, and which may readily suffer the perspiring matter to pass through it. In this respect, I know nothing more prejudicial than to wear fur, which, by

its great warmth, weakens the skin very much; does not promote evaporation, but sweat; and, on account of the thickness of the leather, does not suffer the perspiring particles to fly off. The consequence is, that a continual vapour-bath is formed between the fur and the skin, and that a great part of the impure matter is again thrown back on the body, and imbibed by it. Far better is flannel, which has the advantage of fur, without the disadvantage of attracting dirt and occasioning too much heat. But all these warm coverings on the bare skin are to be recommended only during intense cold or for weakly people subject to rheumatism. In infancy and youth, and for those whose bodies are sound, it is far preferable to wear next the skin either linen or cotton, with a vest of the same in summer, and in winter one of woollen.

5th. One should use much bodily exercise; for this is a great promoter of insensible perspiration.

6th. Avoid all food unfavourable to perspiration. Of this nature is fat of every kind, pork, goose, cheese, &c.

## CHAPTER XII.

Proper food. Moderation in eating and drinking. Preservation  
of the teeth.

THE idea of proper regimen is somewhat relative. In general, we find that those men who were not too nice or particular in regard to their food, but who lived sparingly, attained to the greatest age; and it is an advantage peculiar to man, that he can digest and assimilate the most heterogeneous kinds of nourishment, and is not, like other animals, confined to one certain class. It is proved that people in a natural state, who are much exposed to the free open air and to exercise, require few rules respecting their diet. It was our artificial manner of living that first rendered regimen necessary.

It is at any rate certain, that the prolongation of life does not so much depend on the quality, as on the quantity, of our nourishment; and the instance of Cornaro affords an astonishing proof how far a man of weakly constitution may thereby prolong his existence.

It may with truth be asserted, that the greater part of mankind eat more than is necessary; and by being cramped and over-fed in infancy, we are deprived of that natural sensation which ought to tell us when we have enough.

I shall here only give such common rules in regard to eating and drinking as will suit the generality of mankind; and which, I am convinced, will have an essential influence in prolonging life.

1st. It is not what we eat, but what we digest, that does us good, and serves to nourish our bodies. *He who wishes to live long ought, therefore, to eat slowly; as our food must obtain in the mouth the first degree of prepara-*

tion and assimilation. This is effected by its being sufficiently chewed and mixed with saliva; both which I consider as a principal part of the business of restoration, and consequently set great value upon them in regard to the prolongation of life, especially as it appears by my researches that all those who were accustomed to eat slowly attained to a great age.

2nd. A great deal depends on *good teeth*; and, therefore, I can with propriety reckon *preservation of the teeth* among those means that tend to prolong life. By the following rules, if observed from infancy, the teeth may be preserved fast and sound to the greatest age.

One must always join with the flesh used for food a sufficient quantity of vegetables and bread; for flesh adheres more readily between the teeth, and tends to injure them. It will be found, therefore, that those who use little or no flesh, boors and country people, have always the best teeth, though they never clean them. But no tooth-powder can be more efficacious than a piece of dry burnt bread; and it is a custom very salutary for the teeth, to chew slowly a crust of bread after every meal.

Avoid exposing the teeth to a sudden transition from heat to cold, or the contrary; for the teeth are covered with a glassy kind of enamel, which may be easily cracked by such sudden changes; so that corrupted particles can insinuate themselves into the rents, and lay the first foundation of decay within them. It will be best, therefore, never to take too hot or too cold things into the mouth; and be careful, above all, not to drink cold liquor while you are eating warm food, such as hot soup, &c.

Never eat sugar; and avoid confections, which are mixed with a great deal of tough calcareous particles.

As soon as you observe that a tooth is decayed, have it immediately pulled out, otherwise it will infect the rest.\*

\* It is an error to suppose that a decayed tooth has the power of infecting its neighbour, and it is bad advice to suggest its extraction. One of the chief agents of destruction of the teeth is pressure, therefore a tooth usually decays on the side which is contiguous to



Wash your teeth with water every morning, and in particular after each meal. This will remove any remains of food adhering to them, which commonly fix themselves between the teeth, and lay the first ground for decay.

Those who observe these rules will seldom have occasion for tooth-powder. But if the teeth have a tendency, as is the case naturally in some men, to become foul, or to acquire what is called tartar, I recommend the following harmless prescription:—Take half an ounce of red sandal-wood, with a quarter of an ounce of China-root (*similar aspera Chinensis*); reduce them to a fine powder, and sift it through a hair-sieve.\* Then add to it six drops of the oil of cloves, and the same quantity of bergamot oil; and rub the teeth with it in the morning.

3rd. Beware of studying, reading, or straining the head while at table. That period must certainly be consecrated to the stomach. It is the time of its government; and the mind must no further interfere with it than may be necessary to assist its operations. Laughter is one of the greatest helps to digestion with which I am acquainted; and the custom, prevalent among our forefathers, of exciting it at table by jesters and buffoons, was founded on true medical principles. In a word, endeavour to have

another, and as in all probability both teeth are sufferers from the pressure, both are liable to decay; because one precedes the other in this action, it has been inferred that the decayed tooth has contaminated its fellow, but this is not the fact. Then as to the advice. When a tooth is decayed, the patient should seek the dentist, who will probably clear out the dead part, and stop the cavity with gold. When this operation is well and judiciously performed, the tooth will last as long as if it were perfectly sound. Hence, the chief art of the dentist of the present day is to save the teeth and not waste them, as was the case when our author flourished.—EDITOR.

\* This tooth-powder, composed of materials no longer in use, is very inferior to the tooth-powders of the present day; the best of which are those made either of simple *precipitated* chalk: of precipitated chalk with one-eighth part of orris-root; or of precipitated chalk with one-eighth part of camphor. Camphor has of late been accused of doing injury to the teeth, by rendering them brittle; whether such be really the case I am unable to decide.—EDITOR.

cheerful and merry companions at your meals. What nourishment one receives amidst mirth and jollity, will certainly produce good and light blood.

4th. Do not expose yourself to violent motion after meals; for this will disturb, in an astonishing degree, the digestion and assimilation of your nourishment. It will be best to stand, or to walk about slowly. The properest time for exercise is before meals, or three hours after.

5th. Never eat so much that you feel you have a stomach. It will be best to give over before you are completely sated. The quantity of food must be always proportioned to one's bodily labour: the less the labour, the less ought to be the nourishment.

6th. In the choice of food one should incline more to vegetables. Flesh has always a greater tendency to putrefaction; and vegetables, on the other hand, to acidity, which corrects putrefaction, our continual and greatest enemy. Besides, animal food is always of a more heating and stimulating nature; whereas vegetables produce cool, mild blood; lessen the internal motion, mental as well as bodily irritability; and powerfully retard vital consumption. Lastly, animal food yields more blood and nourishment; and requires, in order to be beneficial to us, much more labour and bodily motion; and, by the use of it, one also is liable to become plethoric. On this account it is not proper for men of letters, and those who sit a great deal; as such people do not require so strong restoration, or so much addition of substance, but only of those fine nourishing juices that are necessary for the spiritual functions. One, above all, ought to avoid flesh in summer, and when putrid fevers are prevalent. We find that it is not those who lived on flesh, but on vegetables, pulse, fruit, and milk, who attained to the greatest age; Lord Bacon mentions a man of 120, who, during his whole life, never used any other food than milk. The Brahmins, by their religion, are confined merely to vegetables, and, for the most part, live to the age of 100. John Wesley, in the middle of his life, gave over the use

of flesh; lived upon vegetables alone, and attained the age of 88.

7th. At night, one ought to eat sparingly, and use little or no flesh, if cold it will be best; and to sup a few hours before bed-time.

8th. Never neglect to use a sufficient quantity of drink. It too often happens that people, by inattention to the calls of Nature, forget drinking altogether, and are no longer reminded of it; which is the grand cause of aridity, obstructions in the lower stomach, and a multitude of diseases to be found so frequently among men of letters, and females, who lead a sedentary life. But it is to be observed, that the best time for drinking is not while one is eating, as the gastric juices are thereby rendered too thin, and the stomach weakened—but about an hour after meals.

The best drink is *water*, a liquor commonly despised, and even considered as prejudicial—I will not hesitate, however, to declare it to be one of the greatest means for prolonging life. Read what is said of it by that respectable veteran, Theden, surgeon-general, who ascribes his long life of more than 80 years chiefly to the daily use of seven or eight quarts (from twenty to twenty-four pounds) of fresh water, which he drank for upwards of forty years. Between his thirtieth and fortieth year he was a most miserable hypochondriac, oppressed with the deepest melancholy; tormented with a palpitation of the heart, indigestion, &c.; and imagined that he could not live six months. But from the time that he began this water-regimen, all these symptoms disappeared; and, in the latter half of his life, he enjoyed better health than before, and was perfectly free from the hypochondriac affection. One great point, however, is, that the water must be *fresh*, that is, recently drawn from a spring or running stream, and be put into a vessel well stopped; for all spring water, like the mineral, contains fixed air, which renders it strengthening and favourable to digestion. Pure, fresh water, has the following advantages, which certainly must inspire us with respect for it.

The element of water is the greatest and only promoter of digestion—by its coldness and fixed air it is an excellent strengthener and reviver of the stomach and nerves. On account of its abundance of fixed air, and the saline particles it contains, it is a powerful preventative of bile and putrefaction. It assists all the secretions of the body. Without water there could be no excretion; as, according to the latest experiments, oxygen is a component part of it, by drinking water we actually imbibe a new stimulus of life.

I cannot here omit to say something in favour of soups (liquid nourishment), since it has been lately fashionable to deery them as prejudicial.

The moderate use of soups is certainly not hurtful; and it is singular that people should imagine that it tends too much to relax the stomach. Does not all our drink, even though cold, become in a few minutes a kind of warm soup in the stomach; and does not the stomach retain the same temperature during the whole day? Be careful only not to use it hot, in too great quantity at one time, or too watery. It is attended even with great advantages. It supplies the place of drink, particularly to men of letters, women, and all those who do not drink, or drink very little except at table, and who, when they give over soup, receive into their blood too little moisture. And it is here to be remarked, that fluids used in the form of soup unite much better and sooner with our juices than when drunk cold and raw. On this account soup is a great preventative of dryness and rigidity in the body, and therefore the best nourishment for old people, and those who are of an arid temperament. It even supplies the place of medicine. After catching cold, in nervous headaches, colics, and different kinds of cramp in the stomach, warm soup is of excellent service. It may serve as a proof of the utility, or at least harmlessness, of soup, when I remark that our forefathers, who certainly had more strength than we have, used soup; that it is used by rustics, who are stronger than those in refined life; and that all the old

people with whom I ever was acquainted were great friends to it.

*Wine* rejoices the heart of man, but it is by no means necessary for long life, since those who never drank it seem to have become oldest. Nay, as a stimulant, which accelerates vital consumption, it may tend very much to shorten life, when used too frequently, or in too great abundance. To render it friendly and not prejudicial to life, it must be drunk daily, but always in moderation: the younger a man is in less, and the older in the greater quantity. It is best when one considers and uses wine as the seasoning of life, and reserves it for days of mirth and recreation to enliven the friendly circle.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Mental tranquillity. Contentment. Dispositions of mind,  
and employments which tend to prolong life.

PEACE of mind, cheerfulness, and contentment, are the foundation of all happiness, all health, and long life. Some may here say, these are means which we have not in our own power; they depend upon external circumstances. But to me it appears that the case is not so: for, otherwise, the great and rich would be the most contented and happy, and the poor the most miserable. Experience, however, shows the contrary; and more contentment, without doubt, is to be found amidst poverty, than among the class of the rich and wealthy.

There are sources then of contentment and happiness which lie in ourselves, and which we ought carefully to search out and to use. Let me here be permitted to mention a few of these helps, recommended by the simplest philosophy, and which I offer merely as rules of regimen, the good advice of a physician how to prolong life.

1st. Endeavour above all things to subdue your passions. A man who is continually subject to the impulse of his passions, is always in an extreme and exalted state, and can never attain that peaceful frame so necessary for the support of life. His internal vital consumption is thereby dreadfully increased, and he must soon be destroyed.

2nd. People should accustom themselves to consider life not as an object, but the means of attaining to higher perfection: and our existence and fate as always directed to a higher aim, and subjected to a more exalted power. They should never lose sight of that point of view which

the ancients named trust in providence. They will thus have the best clue to direct their way through the labyrinth of life, and the greatest security against all attacks by which their peace of mind might be disturbed.

3rd. Live always, but in the proper sense, for the day; that is, employ every day as if it were your last, without taking any thought for to-morrow. Unhappy men who still think of what is to come, and, amidst your plans and projects for the future, lose the enjoyment of the present! The present is the parent of the future; and he who fully employs each day and each hour according to its destination, can in the evening lie down to repose with the agreeable satisfaction of having not only lived that day and fulfilled its object, but of having also laid the best foundation for the enjoyment of the future.

4th. Endeavour to form as just conceptions as possible of every event, and you will find that the greater part of the evils in the world arise from mistakes, false interest, or precipitation; and that the principal point is not so much *what* is done to us, as *how* we take it. He who possesses this happy talent is independent of external circumstances. As *Weishaupt* has said, "It is certain that wisdom alone is the source of pleasure, and that folly is the source of misery. Without a total resignation in the will of providence, a conviction that all events are ordered for our good, and that contentment with the world which thence arises, everything is folly, and will lead to dissatisfaction."

5th. One should always strengthen and confirm more and more one's trust and confidence in mankind, and in all the noble virtues, benevolence, friendship, affection and humanity which thence arise. Consider every man as good, till you are convinced of the contrary by incontestable proofs; and even then man ought to be looked upon as a being misled by error, who deserves our compassion much rather than our hatred. Man indeed would be good, were he not seduced by ignorance, misconception, and false interest. Woe to those whose philosophy

consists in trusting no one! Their life is a continual state of defensive and offensive war; and they must bid farewell to cheerfulness and contentment. The more a man entertains good wishes to all around him, the more will he render others happy, and the more happiness will he himself enjoy.

6th. To promote contentment and peace of mind, *Hope* is indispensably necessary. He who can hope prolongs his existence, not merely in idea, but physically, by the peace and equanimity which he thus secures.—I do not allude here to hope within the narrow boundaries of our present existence, but to hope beyond the grave! In my opinion, hope in immortality is the only hope that can make life of any value, and render the burdens of it easy and supportable.—Hope and Faith, ye great and divine virtues! who, without you, is able to wander through a life so full of error and deceit, whose beginning, as well as end, is involved in thick darkness; the duration of which is a moment, and in which we scarcely begin to look forwards to futurity when we are swallowed up by destruction. Ye are the only supports of the wavering; the greatest revivers of the weary traveller. Those who do not honour you as exalted virtues, must embrace you as indispensable assistants in this terrestrial life, and endeavour to be strong in you through a love for themselves, if not through a love for the things that are invisible.—In this respect one can say that religion itself may be a means for prolonging life. The more it subdues the passions, promotes self-denial, produces internal tranquillity, and enlivens the above consoling truths, the more will it serve to extend the period of mortal existence.

*Joy*, also, is one of the greatest panaceas of life. One must not, however, believe that it is always necessary to excite it by sought-for events and fortunate incidents. By that frame of mind which I have already delineated, people may be rendered susceptible of it; and those who have attained to that happy disposition will never want opportunities of rejoicing. But one should never neglect



to seek and employ every occasion of indulging in joy that is pure and not too violent. No joy is more healthful, or better calculated to prolong life, than that which is to be found in domestic happiness, in the company of cheerful and good men, and in contemplating with delight the beauties of Nature. A day spent in the country, under a serene sky, amidst a circle of agreeable friends, is certainly a more positive means of prolonging life than all the vital elixirs in the world.—*Laughter*, that external expression of joy, must not here be omitted. It is the most salutary of all the bodily movements; for it agitates both the body and the soul at the same time; promotes digestion, circulation, and respiration; and enlivens the vital power in every organ.

The higher pursuits and employment of the mind deserve here a place also; but I must remark, that it will be necessary to observe those prudential rules, which I have already laid down, to prevent an abuse of them. These higher enjoyments and pleasures are entirely peculiar to man, and an important source of vital restoration. Among these I reckon, above all, the reading of agreeable and instructive books; the study of interesting sciences; contemplating Nature, and examining her secrets; the discovering of new truths, by the combination of ideas, improving conversation, &c.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## Reality of character.

It is well known how extremely prejudicial to life is that occupation which renders it necessary for a man to exist some hours daily in an assumed state, not natural to him, I mean the employment of a player.

What then must the case be with those people who always carry on a like occupation, who are continually acting this or the other feigned part on the grand theatre of the world, and who never really are what they appear to be? Those indeed who are deceitful, live always under disguise, restraint, and a false character. They may be found, above all, among the over refined and too highly cultivated classes of mankind: but I am acquainted with no condition more unnatural.

It is bad enough to be obliged to wear clothes not made for us, which everywhere pinch and confine us, and which render every movement painful. But what is this to wearing a false character; to a moral restraint, where our words, conduct, gestures, and actions, are in continual opposition to our internal feelings and wishes; where we violently suppress our strongest natural propensities, and assume foreign ones; and where we are obliged to keep continually strained, every nerve and every vessel, in order to carry on that deception which is our whole existence? Such a false state is nothing else than a continual cramp; and this is proved by the consequences. An incessant restlessness and anxiety, deranged circulation and digestion, continued contradiction both physical and moral, are its unavoidable effects. In the end, it becomes impossible for these unfortunate men to lay aside this assumed cha-

racter ; so that it becomes a second nature. They are at length lost, and cannot again find themselves. In a word, this false state keeps up continually a secret nervous fever. Internal irritation, and external cramp, are, both, parts of it ; and it must lead to destruction and the grave, the only place where such wretched beings can hope ever to lay aside the mask.

## CHAPTER XV.

Agreeable stimulants of the senses and of sensation  
moderately used.

THESE have a double effect in the prolongation of life. In the first place, by their immediate influence on the vital power, they enliven, strengthen, and exalt it; and, secondly, by increasing the activity of the whole machine, they put into much greater activity the organs of digestion, circulation, and secretion, which perform the most important functions of restoration. A certain cultivation and refinement of our sensibility is therefore healthful and necessary; because it renders us more susceptible of these enjoyments; only it must not be carried too far, else it may become a disease. In stimulating the senses also great care must be taken not to exceed the proper measure; for the same enjoyment which, when used in a moderate degree, is capable of restoring, may, if used too much, consume and exhaust.

All agreeable stimulants, which can affect us through the sight, hearing, smell, taste, and feeling, may be included under this head; and therefore the pleasures of music, painting, and the other imitative arts, poetry, &c., as they can exalt and renew these enjoyments. In the present view, however, it appears to me that *Music* deserves the preference, because no mental impression can have so speedy and immediate an effect in tuning, enlivening, and regulating the vital operations. Our whole frame assumes spontaneously the tone and character of the music; the pulse becomes either quicker, or more calm; the passions are roused, or softened, according to the will of this language of the soul, which, without words, merely through

the power of melody and harmony, acts immediately upon our most internal organs, and by these means enchants us often more irresistibly than eloquence itself. It is much to be wished that the study of music in this view were more common, and that it were more employed for such a noble purpose.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Preventing diseases. Judicious treatment of them. Proper use of medicine and physicians.

DISEASES, as has been already shown, belong, for the most part, to those causes which shorten life, and are even capable of breaking the vital thread abruptly. The business of medicine is to guard against these, as well as to cure them: and so far medicine may be considered and employed as a mean for prolonging life.

But error, here, is too common. Sometimes it is believed that this beneficial art can never be sufficiently employed, and that people can never take too many medicines. Sometimes it is so much abhorred, as something unnatural, that too few are used; and sometimes the falsest conceptions are formed of medicine, as well as of physicians; and both are employed in an improper manner. To this may be added, in modern times, a multitude of popular books, by which a great deal of crude, undigested information on medical subjects has been diffused among the public; and hence a greater misapplication of medicine has been occasioned, and the utmost injury to the health of mankind in general.

It is impossible for every one to be a physician. Physic is a science so extensive and difficult, that it requires close and long-continued study, and even a peculiar formation of mind and of the higher powers of the soul. An acquaintance with the rules and means for curing diseases does not form a physician, as some imagine. These rules and means are the result of medical experience; and he only who can perceive the connexion of them with the causes of disease, and the whole chain of grounds and inferences from which they are deduced, in a word, who

can himself discover these means, deserves to be called a physician. From this it appears that the art of medicine never can be known by the generality of the public.

That branch of the medical art only which teaches an acquaintance with the human body, so far as it may be useful for every man to know, and the method and manner of guarding against diseases and preserving health, both individually and generally, can, or ought to, form a part of that instruction and information which should be communicated to the public. This is evident from the simple idea of disease, and the helps to be applied. What is meant by administering medicines and curing diseases? Nothing else than by an unusual impression to produce an unusual change in the human body, by which an unnatural state named disease may be removed. Disease and the operation of medicines are each an unnatural state; and the application of medicine is nothing else than exciting an artificial disease, in order to expel one that is natural. This may be seen when a man in good health takes physic, which will always render him ill in a greater or less degree. The use of medicine is, therefore, of itself prejudicial; and can be excused and rendered healthful only when a more diseased state of the body is thereby removed. This right of making one's self or others sick artificially, ought never to be exercised but by those who are sufficiently able to discover what proportion the disease may bear to the means; consequently, by physicians; otherwise it may happen that, when the means perhaps are altogether unnecessary, one may be rendered ill; or that the means will not be suited to the disease, and therefore the poor patient must suffer under two maladies instead of having one; or that the means may promote and increase the diseased state already existing. In cases of disease it will be far better to use no medicine at all, than to employ that which is not proper.

As none, therefore, but people regularly bred, ought to be allowed to practise medicine, this important question

arises : *How must medicine be used when we wish to employ it as the means of prolonging life?* In order to answer the above question, I shall here give some general rules and definitions.

But, first, let me be permitted to say a few words on a part of this research, which, though most interesting to the physician, is of too much importance even to others to be passed over in silence. I mean, *How does the practice of physic, in general, contribute to the prolongation of life?* Can one consider it absolutely as a means for prolonging our existence? Without doubt we can, so far as it cures disorders that might destroy us—but not always in other respects: and I shall here add, for the consideration of my medical brethren, a few observations which may show that to restore health and prolong life are not the same; and that the point is not merely to cure a disease, but *how* it is cured. *First*, it is certain, from what has been said, that medicine operates by occasioning an artificial illness. Every disease is attended with irritation and a loss of power. If the medicine, therefore, be more powerful than the disease, the patient will be cured; but he will be more weakened by the process of the cure, and more will be deducted from the duration of his life than would have been taken from it by the disease. This is the case when people, on trifling occasions, employ immediately the most powerful and the most violent medicines. *Secondly*, a disease may be cured by various ways and methods. The difference is, that one leads the crisis sometimes to one part, and sometimes to another; or that the disorder is removed sooner by one method, and more slowly by another. These different modes of cure may all, however, lead to a restoration of health, but be of very different effect in regard to the prolongation of life. The more a cure allows the disease to continue, and to weaken the powers and the organs; or the more it affects the organs necessary for life, or conducts the disease thither, and consequently impedes afterwards vital restoration (as for example, when the important system of digestion is made



the seat of the disease, and weakened by powerful remedies; or lastly, the more a cure wastes unnecessarily the vital power in general, as by too profusely bleeding, withdrawing the usual nourishment too incessantly, &c., the more will it weaken the grounds of longevity, even though it may remove the disease. *Thirdly*, one must never forget that disease itself may be useful and necessary for prolonging life. There are many diseases which are nothing else than an exertion of Nature to restore the equilibrium that has been destroyed, to evacuate corrupted matter, or to dissipate obstructions. If a physician, therefore (according to the true *Brownian* method), does nothing more than check the disease from showing itself outwardly, without paying attention to remote causes and consequences, he only destroys the active counteraction of Nature, by which it endeavours to remove the real disease: he quenches the fire outwardly, but suffers it to burn more violently within. He nourishes the germ, the material cause of the evil, which perhaps would have been banished by this process of Nature had it been suffered to be completed, and renders it stronger and more incurable. We have too many instances of patients who believed themselves perfectly cured of a fever or the dysentery, and who afterwards became hectic, or fell into the hypochondriasis, nervous weakness, and the like. No one will deny that such a cure, though it seems for the present to restore the patient to health, may nevertheless shorten the duration of his life.

I shall now proceed to answer a question which concerns those only who are not physicians: *By what means can diseases be prevented; how ought those which have already appeared to be treated; and, in particular, how ought physicians and the medical art to be employed in order to contribute in the highest degree possible to the support and prolongation of life?*

But let me first speak of the means to be used for preventing diseases. As there are two things which belong to the origin of every disease, the cause that

exposes it, and the capacity of the body for being affected by this cause, there are two ways by which disease may be prevented, either to remove that cause, or to destroy the sensibility of the body in regard to it; and upon this is founded the whole medical dietetic, and all the preventative methods. The first method, which has been most commonly pursued, is the most uncertain; for, as long as we are not able to alter our mode of living, it will be impossible to guard against every cause of disease; and the more we deviate from it, the more we shall be affected by them when they attack us. For instance, cold never hurts any one so much as those who, in general, keep themselves exceedingly warm. Far better is the second method, to endeavour to guard against those causes of disease which can be avoided; and to accustom one's self to the rest, in order that the body may be rendered insensible to them.

The principal causes of disease, which can, in a great measure, be guarded against, are, intemperance in eating and drinking, immoderate enjoyment of physical love, great heat and cold, or a sudden transition from the one to the other; passions, violent exertion of the mind, too much or too little sleep, checked evacuations, and poisons.

One ought, however, to render the body less susceptible of these causes, or to harden it pathologically; and for that purpose I recommend the following means: First, the daily enjoyment of free air. In good or bad weather, during rain, wind or snow, the excellent practice of walking or riding for a few hours in the open air, must be continued every day *without exception*. This will contribute in an incredible degree to harden the constitution, and to promote longevity; and, when done daily, the body will soon become so strong as to be affected by no kind of weather. It is to be recommended, therefore, in particular, to those who are subject to the gout and the rheumatism.—Secondly, to wash daily the whole body with cold water; not to keep one's self too warm; and to pre-

serve the activity of the body. Never let the body sink into too passive a state, but endeavour, by muscular motion, friction, and gymnastic exercises, to keep up in it a kind of counteraction. The more passive the body is, the more susceptible will it be of disease. Lastly, a certain freedom and immunity from restraint in your way of life; that is to say, do not bind yourself too rigidly to certain rules and habits, but allow yourself a moderate indulgence. Those who confine themselves with too much severity to order and regimen, be they ever so good, make themselves thereby more susceptible of disease; for if they deviate in the least from what is now become to them a second nature, some kind of indisposition will be the consequence. A little irregularity, by the gentle revolutions which it effects in the body, may be of great use in purifying, opening and dissipating; and even pernicious things lose a great deal of their noxious quality when one is accustomed to them. A little less sleep than usual; to drink sometimes a glass more than common; to eat a little more food, or substances harder of digestion; to expose oneself to cold or heat by riding, dancing, and the like; to take exercise till one is tired, and sometimes to fast a day, are all means, therefore, that contribute to harden the body, and which give more latitude to the health, as they free it from too slavish a dependence on the uniformity of habit, to which it is not always possible for us to be confined.

A grand point in guarding against disease is, that every one should try to discover to what malady he is constitutionally most disposed, in order that this tendency may be destroyed, or at least that all opportunity of its being converted into disease may be removed. On this is grounded individual regimen; and every man ought to observe that which is proper for him, so far as to counteract his particular morbid disposition. To inquire into and determine this point is indeed the business principally of the medical practitioner; and I am therefore of opinion, that people, on a subject of so much

moment, should consult an intelligent physician, and allow him to judge what diseases they have the greatest disposition to, and what regimen may be best suited for them. In this respect the ancients were more prudent than we. They employed the medical art and physicians chiefly for determining their dietetic mode of life; and even their astrological, chiromantic, and other researches of the like kind, tended, at bottom, to define the moral and physical character of man, and to prescribe for him accordingly a proper mode of living and regimen. They undoubtedly did much better in thus employing their physicians than if they had run to them every week to make them prescribe for them purgatives or emetics. But for this purpose a judicious, prudent, and acute physician is necessary; while, on the other hand, any empiric is capable of writing a prescription. These people, at any rate, had a surer means of distinguishing a false from a true prophet.

That those unacquainted with the medical art may be enabled, as much as possible, to determine the nature of their constitution, and what tendency it has to disease, I shall here give the following rules:—

1st. Examine what disposition to disease you inherit from your parents. There are certain morbid tendencies which may be communicated by generation, such as to the gout, indigestion, nervous weakness, and consumption. If these evils have taken root in the parents, there is great reason to suspect a disposition to them in the children. By a proper regimen they can, however, be prevented from attaining to a great height.

2nd. A disposition to some disorders may be created by the first treatment in infancy; especially if a child be kept too warm, which excites a tendency to perspiration, renders the skin flaccid, and, by these means, disposes the body to rheumatic disorders. Too early application to learning, gives a tendency to nervous weakness, and diseases of the nerves.

3rd. A tendency to certain diseases is connected with

some forms and kinds of bodily structure. Those who are tall and thin, who have a long slender neck, a flat breast, projecting shoulders, and who have grown up suddenly to a great height, must be on their guard chiefly against consumptions, and in particular as long as they are under the age of thirty. Those who have a short thickset body, a large thick head, with a short neck, so that the head seems to be stuck between the shoulders, show a disposition to apoplexy; and must beware of everything that may give occasion to that disease. In general, all overgrown people have a tendency more or less to consumption and disorders of the breast.

4th. Every man ought carefully to examine his temperament. If it be sanguine or choleric, it gives a tendency to inflammation; but if phlegmatic or melancholic, to chronic diseases and weakness of the nerves.

5th. The climate also, and the spot in which one lives, may create a tendency to disease. If they are cold and damp, one may rest assured that they will produce a disposition to nervous and bilious fevers, ague, gout, and rheumatism.

6th. To pay attention, in particular, to one's weakest part is of importance. Every man, in a physical sense, has his weak side; and all causes of disease are accustomed, in general, to fix themselves in those parts which are by nature weakest. Those, for example, who have weak lungs, will be affected chiefly in that part; and everything almost will give rise to a catarrh or disorder of the chest. If the stomach be weak, it will be acted upon by every slight cause; and indigestion, crudity and foulness of it will be the consequence. If one is acquainted with these parts, one may contribute very much to the prevention of disease, and the prolongation of life; partly by guarding them against morbid causes, and partly by strengthening them, and depriving them of their too great sensibility. As much depends, therefore, on acquiring the art how to discover the weakest parts of one's body, I shall give the following signs, which may be understood

by those even who are not physicians :—Observe on what parts any mental shock, or violent affection, produces the greatest effect; for these are the weakest. If these causes immediately excite a cough or uneasy sensation in the chest, the lungs are the part pointed out; if they occasion a compression of the stomach, flatulency, and the like, one may be assured that the weak part is the stomach. Observe also where the effects of other morbid influences are reflected; as, for example, the effects of a surfeit, a cold, overheating, violent exercise, &c. If the chest be attacked, that may be considered as the weakest part. It is of equal importance to observe which way the blood and juices have the greatest tendency; what parts are usually the reddest and the hottest, and where perspiration appears in the greatest abundance; for, there, if the rest of the body do not perspire, will disease most readily fix itself. One may also, in general, conclude that any part which one uses violently and immoderately, or which one overstrains, will become weaker: for example, the brain among studious people; the chest among singers; the stomach among gluttons, &c.

I shall now proceed to answer the question, *In what manner should a disease which has already taken place be treated, and what use ought to be made of physicians and of the medical art?* The most important part of the answer may be reduced to the following rules :—

1st. Never use medicine without a sufficient cause; for, who wish to make themselves sick unnecessarily? The custom, therefore, of purging, bleeding, and the like, at stated periods, merely for the purpose of guarding against a possible evil, is highly prejudicial. This practice often gives rise to those disorders which one endeavours to avoid.

2nd. It is much better to prevent diseases than to cure them; for the latter is always connected with a greater loss of the powers, and consequently of vital duration. Let the above means, therefore, for guarding against them, be carefully observed.

3rd. As soon, however, as disease makes its appearance, the greatest attention ought to be paid to it; for the most trifling indisposition may conceal under it a very serious malady. This is the case, in particular, with feverish disorders. The commencement of them is shown by the following symptoms:—One experiences an uncommon lassitude; the appetite fails, and one has a much greater desire for drinking; the sleep is interrupted or disturbed by dreams; the usual excretions are checked, or increased in an unnatural manner; one has no inclination for labour, and is affected by headache, and a greater or less degree of coldness, which is followed by heat.

4th. As soon as one perceives these symptoms, nothing is so necessary as to lessen one's nourishment, which strengthens the disease, and to follow the beneficent instinct of Nature, which every animal, to its great advantage, obeys on such occasions. Let the patient abstain from eating; for Nature, by rejecting food, shows that she is incapable of digesting it; and let him drink a little more than usual, but only water, or some other light beverage. One ought also to be kept quiet; to lie in the best position, for the lassitude sufficiently shows that Nature requires her strength for modifying the disease; and one ought to avoid both heat and cold, consequently should neither go out into the open air, nor be shut up in a warm apartment. These simple means, prescribed to us so clearly by Nature herself, are capable, would we only listen to her voice, of checking an infinite number of diseases in their very birth. Old Macklin, that veteran of the London stage, who died in his 99th year, used to say, that, when he found himself ill, during the long course of his life, he always went to bed—took nothing but bread and water—and that by this regimen he was generally relieved from every slight indisposition. I knew a respectable magistrate of fourscore, who, when indisposed, did nothing else than fast, smoke tobacco, and observe the above rules; by which means he had never occasion for medicine.

5th. If one has an opportunity of conversing with a physician, he ought to be consulted, not so much respecting prescriptions, as the state of one's body. Should such an opportunity be wanting, it is much better to prevent by the negative method an increase of the disease, than to employ anything positive, which may perhaps do hurt. No medicine, indeed, ought to be considered as a matter of indifference. Purgatives even, if used at an improper time, may be highly prejudicial. If my readers be desirous of knowing the most harmless, it is a teaspoonful of cream of tartar, stirred round in a glass of water; or the following draught, which certainly is one of the most general remedies for feverish disorders:—Take half an ounce of cream of tartar, and boil it with six pounds of water, in a new earthen pot, until the powder is wholly dissolved. After it is taken from the fire, add to it an orange cut into slices, with from an ounce and a half to three ounces of sugar, according to taste, and then put it into bottles for use. This may serve as one's common beverage.

6th. Be ingenuous with your physician, and give him a true account of your past life, so far as it may relate to the disease; and forget no unfavourable circumstance, especially when the case is stated in writing. Avoid, in particular, all reasoning on it, which is a common fault, or of giving any representation according to a preconceived opinion, but relate merely what you have observed in as unprejudiced a manner as possible.

7th. Make choice of a physician in whom you can place confidence, but none of those who deal in arcana, who are too talkative or inquisitive, who value themselves above others, or who endeavour to make the conduct of others appear in a dubious light; for this always betrays ignorance, a bad head, or a bad heart; in short, none of those who are fond of prescribing strong powerful medicines, or who, according to the common saying, will either cure or kill.

8th. Avoid in particular a physician whose principal



object in his practice is avarice or ambition. A real physician ought to have no objects but the health and preservation of his patients; any others mislead him from the true path, and may be attended with the most prejudicial consequences to those who employ him. If he happen to be so situated with a case that either his reputation or his pocket will suffer if he venture anything for the relief of his patient, he will certainly rather allow the patient to die than lose his reputation. He will also be interested in the fate of his patients, in proportion to their rank and their riches.

9th. The best physician is he who is at the same time a friend. One may be open-hearted with such a man, and place confidence in him. He is acquainted with his patients, and observes them when in a state of health, which is of the utmost importance to enable him to treat them in a proper manner when attacked by disease. In short, he is strongly interested in their condition, and will exert himself with more activity and attention to restore their health, than the physician who acts merely in that capacity. People, therefore, ought to do everything in their power to unite themselves in the tenderest bonds of friendship with their physician; and never to dissolve their intimacy by want of confidence, peevishness, pride, or any other impropriety of behaviour, which is so often shown towards physicians, but always with more injury to the patient.

10th. Be greatly on your guard against any physician who prepares and employs secret medicines; for he is either an interested man, who values his own advantage far above the lives and health of his patients, or an ignorant impostor; and no impostor is more destructive than he who deprives you, not only of your money, but also of your health. If a secret be of any value, and useful to mankind, it should be the property of the public, and ought to be made known for the general benefit; and he who discloses it is entitled without doubt to immortal honour. Those also who conceal such remedies do injury

to thousands; because people cannot use them properly, not being well enough acquainted with them; or because they cannot be procured in common, and be employed by a judicious physician.

11th. Nowhere, in general, ought one to be more attentive to morality of character than in the choice of a physician; for where is it more necessary? If he to whom you blindly intrust your life, who is subject to no tribunal but that of his conscience, and who, to discharge in a complete manner the duty of his calling, must sacrifice all rest and pleasure, nay his own health and life, if this man do not act according to the pure principles of morality, but makes policy, as it is called, his motive, he is a detestable and dangerous character, and ought to be avoided with greater care than the most destructive disease. A physician without morals is not a nonentity—he is a monster.

12th. If people, however, meet with an able and honest physician, they ought to intrust themselves to him with full confidence. This will tend to make the minds of the patients quiet, and be of great service to assist the physician in effecting a cure. Many believe, that the more physicians they collect around them, the more certain they must be of relief; but this is a gross error. I here speak from experience. One physician is better than two—two than three—and so on in proportion. In the same ratio as physicians are increased will the probability of cure decrease; and in my opinion, there is a certain point of medical overloading, in which a cure is physically impossible. Some cases, indeed, may occur, but very seldom, in which a disorder, by being secret or complex, may require a consultation of several. One, however, ought to call in only those who are known to be judicious men, and who will act in concert; and to employ such consultations for discovering and defining the disease, and to form a plan of the method to be followed in the cure. The application of it should always be permitted to one, and to that practitioner in whom people have the greatest confidence.

13th. One ought carefully to observe the crises, or helps and means of which Nature seems to be fondest, and which she perhaps may have employed on former occasions, and whether she is accustomed to assist herself by perspiration, diarrhoea, bleeding at the nose, or otherwise. The same means one must endeavour to promote in every disease of the like kind; and such information is of great importance to the physician.

14th. To pay attention to cleanliness is a precept indispensably necessary to be observed in regard to every disease; for, by means of dirt, any disorder may be converted into one putrid, and far more dangerous. By neglecting this point, therefore, people injure not only their friends and relations, but also the physician, who may thus be deprived of his own health. The patient's linen, on this account, ought to be changed daily, but at the same time with some caution; the air ought to be renewed in his apartment, and all offensive matters should be speedily conveyed from it. As few people as possible should be suffered to continue in it; and all animals, flowers, remains of food, old clothes, and in short every thing that may produce evaporation, ought to be removed from it.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Relief in cases where one is exposed to the danger  
of sudden death.

THERE are certain causes which, where the health is perfectly sound, and where one has the best capacity for long life, may suddenly interrupt and destroy the vital operation. I here allude to the violent causes of sudden death; and as to lessen these, or to render them harmless, is an important part of the art of preserving and prolonging life, I shall lay before my readers what information may be necessary on the subject.

To this head belong all violent kinds of death, which may be effected either by mechanical injuries, or organic derangement; and they may all be reduced to three classes. They either render the vital organs unfit for performing their functions; destroy suddenly the vital power, as lightning, violent passion, and the greater part of poisons; or they suddenly destroy vital irritability, without the continual agency of which there could be no vital exertion.

The method of counteracting these is twofold. One can either guard against them, or destroy their effect after they have already begun to act.

I shall first speak of the means by which one can guard against them. It is impossible to keep at a distance all these causes; for they are so connected with our life, and in particular with the employment of many, that one must resign life itself in order to avoid them. We can however, procure to our bodies a great degree of immunity from them, and give it some properties by which it will be put in such a condition as to sustain little or

no hurt from them when they approach it. There is, therefore, an objective and a subjective art of guarding against the dangers of death; and the latter is that in which every one should endeavour to acquire a certain degree of perfection. In my opinion, it is necessary for the formation and education of man. The means are exceedingly simple.

1st. Endeavour to give to the body the utmost possible agility and readiness in all bodily exercises. A sufficient cultivation of the corporeal powers, by running, climbing, tumbling, swimming, walking on any narrow ridge, &c. will be a great means of securing one from dangerous accidents; and were such a part of education more common, fewer people would lose their lives by drowning, falls, and other misfortunes of the like kind.

2nd. The judgment should be formed, and one's knowledge rectified, by the study of Natural Philosophy, and Natural History, in regard to every pernicious power. To this belongs an acquaintance with the nature of poisons; the properties of lightning, and the means of avoiding it; the noxious quality and effects of mephitic air, frost, &c. To give sufficient cautions on this subject, it would be necessary for me to write a whole treatise; and I sincerely wish that some one would undertake such a work, and that it may be introduced into schools.

3rd. Endeavour to render the mind intrepid; to give it strength and philosophical equanimity; and accustom it to sudden and unexpected events. This will be doubly beneficial. One will thereby guard against the physical injury of sudden and alarming impressions, and will have more presence of mind to pursue the means proper to be used in cases of sudden danger.

4th. Give to the body a sufficient degree of hardening against cold and heat, or any changes of the like kind. Those who possess this property will be able to brave death on many occasions, when others will be obliged to submit to it.

But, in regard to the danger of death actually existing:

What is to be done in cases of drowning, hanging, suffocation, poisoning, or being struck with lightning, &c.? Even here there are means by which persons apparently dead have been happily brought again to life; and this is a part of medicine which every man should understand, for such accidents may occur to every one, and everything depends on assistance being given speedily. In cases of so much danger each moment is precious; and the simplest means employed immediately, may effect more than the whole wisdom of an Æsculapius could half an hour later. He who first arrives when an accident has taken place should consider it as his duty to apply help instantaneously, and carefully reflect that the life of an unfortunate being may depend on a minute sooner or later.

The violent kinds of death, in regard to their treatment, may be divided into three classes.

The *first class* comprehends suffocation by hanging, drowning, or foul air, and death, or the being struck by lightning, with the mode of treatment. The first and most effectual means in such cases are the following:—

1st. Be as expeditious as you can to draw the body from the water, or to cut the rope, in a word, to remove the cause of death. This alone is sufficient to save the unfortunate person if it be done speedily; but attention to that point is too much neglected. In most places apparatus is kept for giving relief in such cases; but people in general are so slow in applying it, that one might believe it intended rather for the funeral ceremony, than for saving the life of a fellow-creature. I am, therefore, fully convinced, that better machinery for dragging up the bodies of drowned persons would be far more valuable than all the apparatus for restoring suspended animation; and when one sees how unwillingly and in how awkward a manner people undertake this business, how averse they are to it, and what prejudice prevails against it, one will not wonder that so few unfortunate persons should be saved in Germany. I must therefore entreat all governments

to endeavour to bring this part of the establishment for restoring life to greater perfection; and here I include rooting out prejudice,\* disputes respecting jurisdiction, the payment of the reward, and the punishment of voluntary delay.

2nd. The body should be immediately stripped, and every endeavour should be made, as speedily as possible, to excite in it a general warmth. Heat is the first and most general stimulus of life. The same means which Nature employs to quicken life in the beginning, are also the most powerful to produce life a second time. The best thing for that purpose is the tepid bath; but if this cannot be had, the patient may be covered with warm sand, ashes, or thick blankets in a bed; and hot stones should be applied to various parts of the body. Without these means all others will be of little avail; and it is much better to warm thoroughly persons apparently dead, than to use cupping, friction, or the like, and at the same time to suffer them to become stiff with cold.

3rd. To convey air into the lungs is the next process in point of importance, and may be connected with the excitation of heat. It is, indeed, most beneficial when it is done with oxygen gas by means of a pipe and a pair of bellows. But in urgent cases, and to save precious time, it will be sufficient if one presses on the chest so as to expel the air which it contains, and then, by withdrawing the pressure allows it to expand by its own elasticity, and thus fill the lungs with air. This should be done with regularity, so as to imitate ordinary breathing.

4th. Let fall now and then, from a certain height, drops of frigid water or wine on the pit of the stomach. This sometimes has given the first stimulus to restore the motion of the heart.

\* Of this kind is the shameful dread of the dishonour and disgrace which attend the touching of such unfortunate people; the diabolical superstition of many fishermen, that one must not draw the body of a drowned person from the water before sunset, in order that the fish may not be frightened away; or that some rivers must have an annual offering; and other ideas of the like kind, which prevail among the vulgar much more than one might imagine.

5th. Rub with a cloth or flesh-brush the hands and soles of the feet, the belly and the back : irritate the sensible parts of the body, such as the soles of the feet and hollow of the hands, by friction with stimulating oils ; the nose and throat, by means of a feather, or by holding to the nostrils, and dropping on the tongue, volatile spirit of ammonia, &c.

6th. As soon as signs of life begin to appear, pour a spoonful of good wine into the mouth ; and when the patient swallows it, repeat the same thing often. In cases of necessity brandy may be used, but mixed with two-thirds of water.

7th. For those who have been struck by lightning, the earth bath is to be recommended. The body may be either laid, with the mouth open, against a spot of earth newly dug up, or fresh earth may be scraped round it up to the neck.

If these simple means, which every one can and ought to use in regard to his fellow-citizens, when exposed to the danger of sudden death, be speedily employed, they will be of more service than the most complete apparatus applied half an hour later ; and at any rate the intermediate time will not be entirely lost, and the feeble vital spark may be prevented from being totally extinguished.

In the *second class* is comprehended those who have been *frozen*. These require a mode of treatment entirely different ; for by warmth they would be destroyed altogether. Nothing further is to be done than to immerse them in snow up to the head ; or to place them in a bath of the coldest water that can be procured without being frozen. Here life will return of itself ; and as soon as any signs of it appear, give the patients a little warm tea with wine, and put them to bed.

The *third class* contains those who have been poisoned. It is here to be observed, that we are in possession of two invaluable remedies, proper for any poison, which may be everywhere found, and which require no previous acquaintance with medicine—I mean *milk* and *oil*. By the help of



these only, the most dreadful of all the kinds of poisoning, that by *arsenic*, has been cured. Both of them answer the principal object, which is to expel the poison, or to destroy its power. Let persons, therefore, who have been poisoned, drink as much milk as they can (if it in part comes up again, so much the better); and let them, every quarter of an hour, take a cupful of oil of any sort; for it is all the same whether it be oil of linseed, almonds, poppies, or common oil. If it be known with certainty that the poison is arsenic, corrosive sublimate, or any other metallic salt, dissolve soap in water, and let the patient swallow it. This will be sufficient till a physician arrive, and will often render his assistance unnecessary.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## Old age. Proper treatment of it.

OLD age, though the natural consequence of living, and the commencement of death, can itself, on the other hand, be a means for prolonging our existence. It does not, however, increase the power to live, but it retards its being exhausted; and one may thus affirm, that a man in the last period of life, at the time when his powers are lessened, would, were he not old, finish his career sooner.

This position, which appears to be somewhat paradoxical, is confirmed by the following explanation:—Man, during the period of old age, has a much smaller provision of vital power, and much less capacity for restoration. If he lived with the same activity and vigour as before, this provision would be much sooner exhausted, and death would soon be the consequence. Now the character of age lessens the natural irritability and sensibility of the body, by which the effects of internal as well as external irritation, and consequently the exertion and wasting of the powers, are also lessened; and, on this account, as consumption is less, he can with such a stock of powers hold out much longer. The decrease of the intensity of the vital processes, as age increases, prolongs therefore vital duration.

Irritability being thus lessened, lessens also the effect of pernicious impressions and morbid causes, such as the passions, overheating, &c.; it preserves likewise much greater quietness and uniformity in the internal economy, and in that manner secures the body from many diseases. It is observed that, for this reason also, old people are much less attacked by infectious disorders than those who are young.

To this may be added the habit of living, which, without doubt, in the latter period of one's days, contributes to the support of life. An animal operation, which one has carried on so long, always in the same order and succession, becomes at last so customary that it continues through habit when the action of other causes ceases. It is often astonishing how the greatest debility of age will hold out, provided everything remain in its usual order and succession. The spiritual man is sometimes actually dead; and yet the vegetative, the man-plant, still continues to live; but for the latter, indeed, much less is necessary. To this habit of life it is owing also that a man, the older he grows, becomes still fonder of existence.

If old age, therefore, be properly treated and supported, it can be employed, in some measure, as a means of prolonging life; but, as this requires deviations from the general laws, I consider it necessary to give the rules proper to be observed.

The principal points in this treatment are, that one must always endeavour to lessen and soften the increasing dryness and rigidity of the vessels, which at length occasion a complete stoppage of the whole machine; that nourishment and restoration of what has been lost must be facilitated as much as possible; that stronger irritation must be given to the body, because the natural irritability is so much weakened; and that one must promote excretion of the corrupted particles, which in old age is so imperfect, and which therefore produces an impurity of the juices, that accelerates death.—Upon these are grounded the following rules:—

1st. As the natural heat of the body decreases in old age, one must endeavour to support and increase it externally as much as possible. Warm clothing, warm apartments and beds, heating nourishment, and, when it can be done, removal to a warmer climate, are all means, therefore, that contribute greatly to the prolongation of life.

2nd. The food must be easy of digestion, rather fluid

than solid; abundant in concentrated nourishment; and at the same time much more stimulating than would be advisable at an earlier period. Warm, strong, and well-seasoned soups are, therefore, beneficial to old age; and also tender roast meat, nutritive vegetables, good nourishing beer, and, above all, oily generous wine, free from acid, earthy and watery particles, &c., such as Tokay, Spanish, Cyprus, and Cape wines. Wine of this kind is one of the most excellent stimulants of life, and that best suited to old age. It does not inflame, but nourishes and strengthens: it is milk for old people.

3rd. The tepid bath is exceedingly well calculated to increase the natural heat, to promote excretion, particularly of the skin, and to lessen the aridity and stiffness of the whole frame.

4th. Guard against all violent evacuations, such as letting blood, unless when required by particular circumstances; strong purging, exciting perspiration by too much heat, indulging in excesses of any kind. These exhaust the few powers still remaining, and increase aridity.

5th. People, with increasing years, should accustom themselves more and more to a certain order in all the vital operations. Eating, drinking, motion, and rest, the evacuations, and employment, must have their determined periods and succession. Such mechanical order and regularity, at this season of life, may contribute greatly to the prolongation of it.

6th. The body, however, must have exercise, but not violent or exhausting. That which is rather passive will be the best, such as riding in a carriage, and frequent friction of the whole skin, for which sweet-scented and strong ointments may be employed with great advantage, in order to lessen the rigidity of the skin, and to preserve it in a state of softness. Violent bodily shocks must in particular be avoided. These, in general, lay a foundation for the first cause of death.

7th. A pleasant frame of mind, and agreeable employ-

already shown, absolutely requisite, before man can attain to that pre-eminence over animals, in his physical state and vital duration, of which he is really susceptible.

It is well worth the trouble to examine and explain more accurately the influence which real culture has in prolonging life, and to establish how far it differs from that which is false. In lengthening our existence it acts in the following manner:—

It expands the organs to perfection, and consequently renders life richer as well as fuller of enjoyment; and occasions more abundant restoration. How many means of restoration, unknown to the savage, has the man who possesses a cultivated mind!

It renders the whole texture of the body somewhat softer and tenderer; consequently lessens that too great hardness which impedes duration of life.

It secures us against those destructive and life-shortening causes which deprive many savages of their existence; such as cold, heat, the influence of the weather, hunger, poisonous and pernicious substances, &c.

By reason and moral formation it moderates and regulates the passionate and merely animal part within us; teaches us to support misfortunes, injuries, and the like; and, by these means, moderates the too violent and active vital consumption, which would soon destroy us.

It is the foundation of social and political connexions, by which mutual aid laws and police establishments become possible; and these have a mediate effect in prolonging life.

Lastly, it makes us acquainted with a multitude of convenience and means for rendering life more agreeable; which are, indeed, less necessary in youth, but which are of the utmost importance in old age. Nourishment refined by the art of cookery, exercise made easier by artificial helps, more perfect refreshment and rest, are all advantages by which man in a cultivated state can support life much longer in old age, than man in the rude state of nature.

From this it already appears what degree and what kind of culture are necessary in order to prolong life—those which physically, as well as morally, have for their object the highest possible formation of our powers, but which are always regulated by that supreme moral law, to which everything, to be good, suited to its end, and really beneficial, must have a relation.

THE END.

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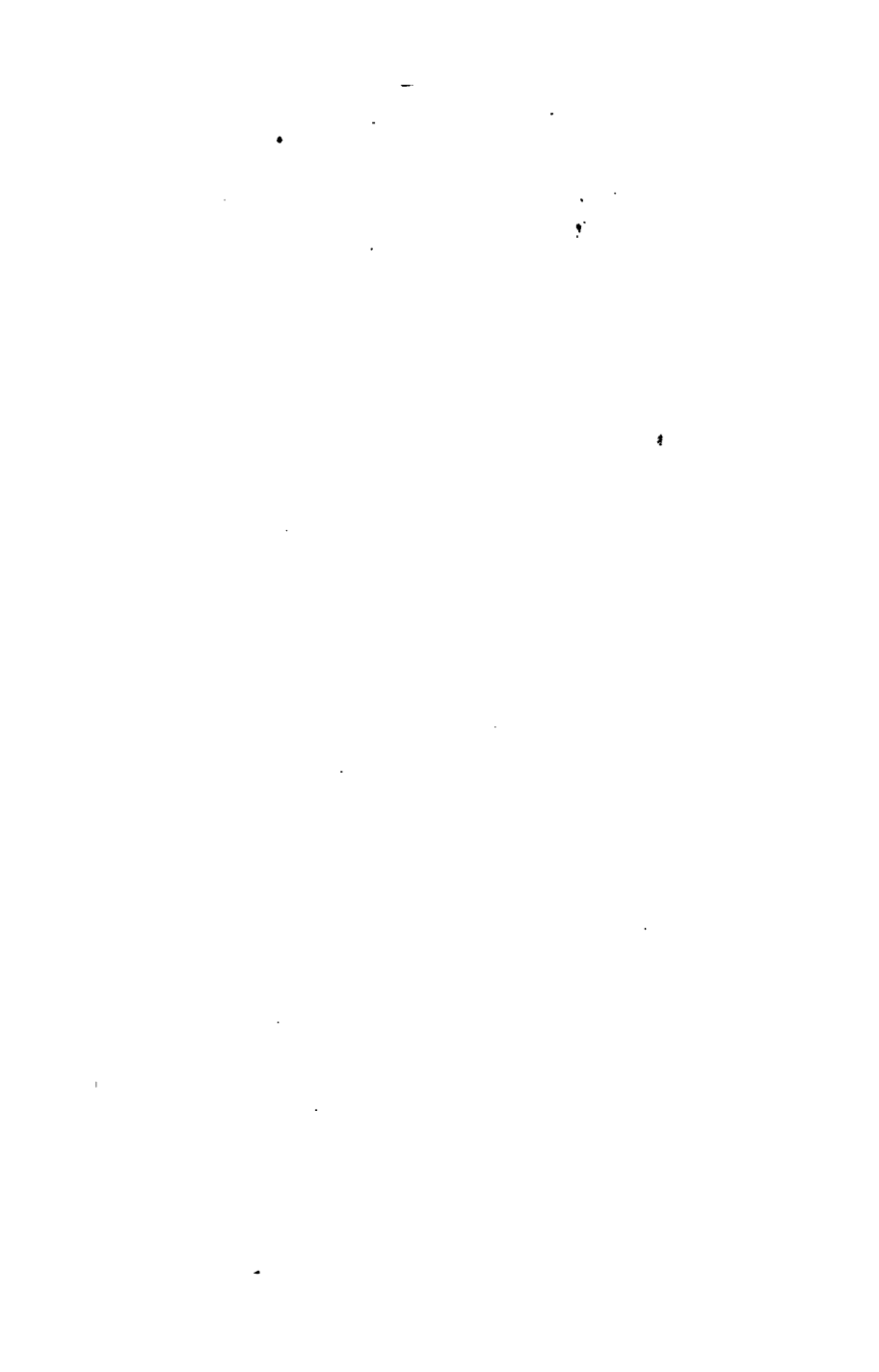
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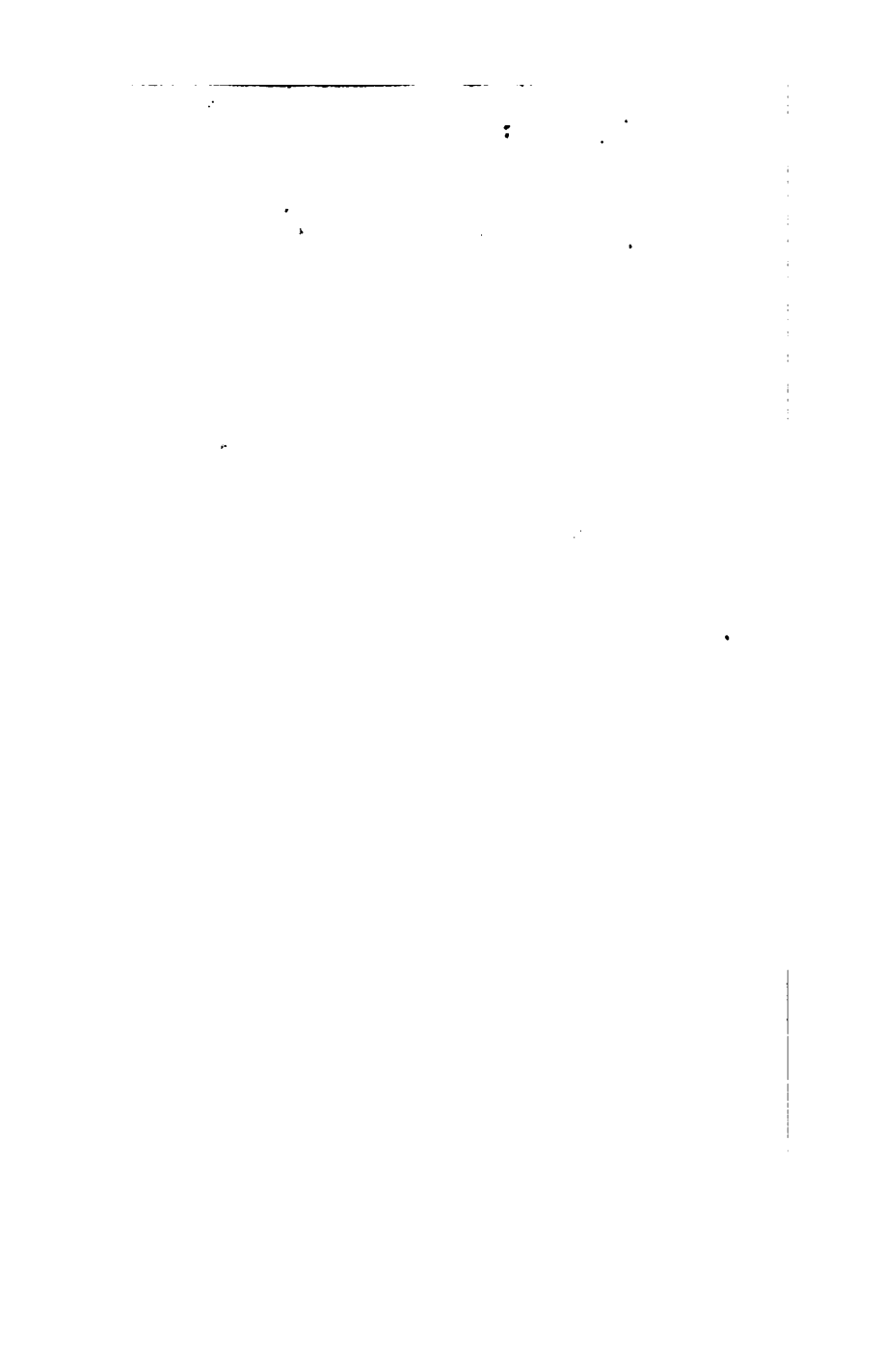
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